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THE
FIRST INTERPRETERS OF JESUS



THE
FIRST INTERPRETERS
OF JESUS

BY

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TO
The Memory of the Men and Women
MISSIONARY AND CHINESE
WHO BY THE SACRIFICE OF LIFE FOR JESUS' SAKE
APPROVED THEMSELVES
FAITHFUL INTERPRETERS OF THE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL
AND GAVE A GLORIOUS ENDING
TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE
THIS VOLUME
ON
The first Interpreters of Jesus
IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

THE interpreters of Jesus who were first in time and whose writings have been preserved in the New Testament, are still first in influence and authority. When compared with the statements of any subsequent writers who have attempted to say who Jesus was and what He did, and especially when compared with the statements of professional theologians of the past and largely also of the present, the utterances of the first interpreters, both in respect to *what* they affirm and even more strikingly in the *spirit* in which they write, are vastly more worthy of the high theme with which they deal. It is a question whether the Church has always rightly estimated this first interpretation of Christianity, whether it has not at times forgotten that it *is* after all only an interpretation and not the very Gospel itself, that the Lord Jesus Christ, His word and work, His life and death and resurrection, is infinitely more than any interpretation, even though it be apostolic and inspired; but however that may be, it is unquestionable that James, Peter and John, Paul and the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, continue to mould the Church's conception of Christ and the Christian re-

ligion. It remains, therefore, a task of immeasurable significance to ascertain as accurately as possible how Jesus and His revelation appeared to these men of the first century.

This task is obviously historical, for it is nothing else than the investigation of a number of ancient Greek writings. The sole aim of the student who undertakes this task — and therefore our sole aim — is to learn the moral and religious views which these ancient Greek writings contain. It is not to defend these views. It is not to show their harmony or lack of harmony with the revelation of Jesus, or with the teaching of the Church in subsequent ages. The solitary question with which we here approach these documents is the question of fact — What do they teach?

I think it important to emphasize the exact form of this question, for thereby the *aim* of the present volume can best be characterized. Our question is not, What does John or Paul teach regarding God, or sin, or immortality, the Church, or the sacraments, or any other particular topic of religion or morals? If we had access to the living writers, we might take our theological categories along and ask them to give us their thought on the various subjects; but instead of the living writers we have some of their writings only, and we cannot assume that when they composed these they had in mind any of our mediæval or modern “skeletons” of theology. We cannot hope, then, to do justice to any

one of these writings if we go to it with a set of specific questions, and search out the words in it which bear upon this or that topic. A procedure of that kind is not interpretation, but is rather a violent attempt to make the New Testament authors think and speak according to our notions of Christian truth. This method is not historical.

On the contrary, we must simply ask, What do these writings teach? What did their authors attempt to impress upon their readers? What is central and what subordinate in each writing? In other words, it is our duty to get at the author's point of view, to see what he saw, and, irrespective of all outside considerations, to report the result. It is plain that we owe this to the author, and if we regard him as an anointed teacher of truth we owe it to ourselves, for the first and fundamental interest of Christianity is to know the facts of the Christian Scriptures.

This, then, is the aim of the present volume, an aim which, as I am well aware, has been very imperfectly realized. The subject is not only as deep and many-sided as the creative forces of Christianity, but it is closely bound up with our faith and our inherited theology, as is also the study of the Gospels; and, therefore, though summoning each new generation to renewed research and fresh presentation of the content of these writings, it still offers peculiar difficulties to a purely historical investigation. No one can hope to

have overcome these difficulties completely, but the least that any serious student can demand of himself is to keep always in mind the supreme value of the historic method, and strive to hold the critical balances with an impartial hand, believing meanwhile that the truth of God is ever more pure and beautiful than his conception of that truth.

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PART I
THE TEACHING OF PAUL

PART I
THE TEACHING OF PAUL

THE FIRST INTERPRETERS OF JESUS

CHAPTER I

JESUS THE MESSIAH

To the apostle Paul, as to other early believers, Christianity was a religion of historical facts and experiences, not a technical theology. Accordingly, the explicit teaching of Paul in regard ^{Introductory.} to Jesus concerns His character and office rather than His nature. His writings contain a clear and positive doctrine on the Messiahship of Jesus, but we can hardly say that they have such a doctrine regarding His essential being. Thus, for example, Paul takes as granted that Jesus was a man, but seeks to *prove* that He was the Messiah. Again, he never raises the question whether the being of Jesus was the same as the being of God. It is true that there are various statements in Paul's writings that concern the nature of Jesus, but they are relatively incidental in character. The truths put forward for their own sake, as fundamental elements of Christian doctrine, concern the character and the work of Jesus. Yet, before coming to these more important aspects of the subject, we will consider

what the author says or implies in regard to the humanity of Jesus.

Paul regarded Jesus as a true man, one in whom nothing that is essential to the constitution of man was lacking. Thus, in the first place, he habitually designates Jesus as a man, and even when dealing with His supreme service as the Saviour. The gift of God, he says, is a gift by the grace of "the one man, Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 15). Remission of sins is proclaimed "through this man" (Acts xiii. 38), and God will judge the world in righteousness "by the man whom He hath ordained" (Acts xvii. 31).

Again, Paul ascribes to Jesus a human origin. He was descended from Abraham (Gal. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 5), born of the seed of David (Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8). As a man descended from the fathers He was the crown of the glorious honors bestowed upon the Jewish people (Rom. ix. 5). Paul never suggests that the human origin of Jesus was limited to the material body. Had he held such a view, and had he wished his readers to hold it, he must have expressed it. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, the simple affirmation that Jesus was a man, born of the seed of David, implies a human origin of His mind no less than of His body.

Paul's statement in 1 Cor. xv. 47, that "the second man is from heaven," cannot be brought in here as evidence to the contrary, showing that he limited the human origin of Jesus to His material side, for the context requires that this verse be referred to the natural and the spiritual *body* (comp. vs. 35). And the verse itself limits the clause "from heaven" to the spiritual

body of Jesus by setting it over against the word "earthly" (*χοϊκός*). For the first man, Adam, was not "of the earth earthly" save in his physical body; he had a spirit from Gqd, allying him to his Maker (Gen. i. 27; ii. 7). Therefore the statement that "the second man is from heaven" is to be referred to the heavenly character of the body of Jesus after the resurrection.

And further, to see in this passage in Corinthians the thought that the humanity of Jesus was transferred from heaven¹ is without support from any other passage in Paul, and is opposed to the Old Testament conception of the Messiah, in which there is no suggestion that his humanity preëxisted. Hence we say that Paul ascribes to Jesus a human origin, and that this includes both body and spirit.²

It may be noticed, in conclusion on this point, that Paul does not refer to the miraculous conception of Jesus. His statement that Jesus was "born of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4) is simply an ordinary way of describing human birth (Matt. xi. 11). Again, he teaches that Jesus was without sin (2 Cor. v. 21), while all the descendants of Adam are sinful (Rom. iii. 23; v. 19), but we cannot infer from this that he saw something miraculous in the birth of Jesus. For neither Paul's teaching in general nor any known facts shut us up to

¹ Comp. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 55; Pfeiderer, *The Influence of the Apostle Paul on the Development of Christianity*, p. 48; Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 331.

² When Paul says that God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3), he does not question the genuineness of His humanity, but suggests that His flesh was *not* sinful. Comp. Sanday, *International Critical Commentary on Romans*. Again, when he says that Jesus was made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man (Phil. ii. 7), it is plain that he is contrasting Christ's state of humiliation with a preceding state of glory.

a miraculous birth as the only way by which sinlessness can be realized.

Once more it appears that Paul regarded Jesus as a true man, for he places Him in parallelism with men.

(3) Jesus in parallelism with men. The significance of this parallelism is shown by a consideration of the following points.

First, God is the God and Father of Jesus as He is the God and Father of believers. This conception is not rare in Paul's writings, but is a part of his constant thought. It seems as natural for him to speak of God as the God and Father of Jesus as it is to speak of Him as his own God and Father (*e.g.* Rom. xv. 6; 1 Cor. xv. 24; 2 Cor. i. 3; xi. 31; Eph. i. 3, 17; Col. i. 3). Herein Paul simply followed the thought of Jesus as made known to us in the Gospels (*e.g.* John xx. 17).

A second point in the parallelism between Jesus and men is that believers are to be conformed to His image (*εἰκῶν*), so that, ultimately, He shall be the first-born, the chief, among many brothers (*ἀδελφοῖς*) (Rom. viii. 29). He is the image of God (2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15), and we are transformed into His image (2 Cor. iii. 18). He is an heir of God, and we are joint-heirs (Rom. viii. 17). All the fulness of God dwelt in Jesus, but when He dwells in the believer, the believer also is filled unto all the fulness of God, and attains unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (Col. i. 19; ii. 9; Eph. iii. 17, 19; iv. 13). These utterances show plainly that Paul used the expression "image of God" in a religious sense.¹

Again, the life that the glorified Jesus lives, He lives unto God, and Paul exhorts his readers to live just such

¹ Comp. Somerville, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 159.

a life (Rom. vi. 10-11). In the earthly life of Jesus God was with Him (2 Cor. v. 19), the will of God was manifest through Him (1 Thess. v. 18), the knowledge of God shone from His face (2 Cor. iv. 6), and the love of God dwelt in Him (Rom. viii. 39); but Paul uses the same language regarding believers. They are a sanctuary of the living God (2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19). The Spirit of God dwells in them (Rom. viii. 9), and God works in them (1 Cor. xii. 6; Phil. ii. 13). It is one and the same God of whom Paul speaks in these passages, and he employs the same prepositions when speaking of Jesus and of the disciples of Jesus.

Again, as God was in Christ and is in believers, so Paul says both of Christ and of believers that they are *in* God (Col. iii. 3).

Finally, it appears that Paul regarded Jesus as a true man because he not only puts Him in significant parallelism with men, but also distinguishes between Him and God.¹ As we have already seen, Paul speaks of God as the God of Jesus Christ, in keeping with the usage of the Master. That fact is pertinent in this connection, as it was also when speaking of the parallelism between Jesus and men. But there are other points which are now to be more especially considered. Thus, in the first place, though Paul frequently calls Jesus a *man*, he never plainly calls Him God (*θεός*). There are two passages in which it seems grammatically possible to suppose that the word "God" refers to Christ (Rom. ix. 5; Tit. ii. 13), but it is equally possible *not* to refer

¹ No account is taken here of the view that Jesus was a being intermediate between God and man.

it to Him.¹ But even if the word "God" is predicated of Christ in Rom. ix. 5 (this construction is more difficult in the other passage), yet we have in the Old Testament (*e.g.* Ps. lxxxii. 6) and in the usage of Jesus (John x. 34-36) the best of reasons for understanding the word in a qualified sense. But of this we need not speak further. The statement is manifestly unassailable that Paul never clearly calls Jesus *God*. The unbounded gratitude and reverence which he felt toward Jesus, his experience of the grace of God in Him, his observation of the power of the Gospel of Jesus to save and to transform men, must all have led him to apply to his Lord the most exalted predicates which his mind, illumined by the Spirit, could justify. Not only so, but Paul was sometimes confronted by circumstances which, one might naturally think, would have called out the affirmation that Jesus was God, had that affirmation ever formed itself in his own spirit. This was the case when he wrote to the church in Colossæ. The Colossians were inclined to think that there might be a higher manifestation of God than we have in Jesus, and a higher knowledge than the knowledge of the Gospel. In meeting this error Paul highly exalts Jesus. He calls Him the image of the invisible God (Col. i. 15), the one in whom all things hold together (Col. i. 17), in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily (Col. ii. 9), and the head from whom all the body draws its divine increase (Col. ii. 19); but even here, where the situation called for the loftiest predicate which Paul could give to the Lord, he does not call Him *God*.

¹ Comp. Gould, *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 93-94. For an exhaustive exegetical study of Rom. ix. 5, with numerous references to the literature of the subject, see Ezra Abbot, *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis*, June and December, 1881, pp. 87-154.

This, then, is the first significant fact which confirms the statement that Paul distinguished between Jesus and God.

In the second place, Paul affirms repeatedly that God is one, and in immediate connection with this affirmation he makes separate mention of Jesus, plainly distinguishing Him from God. Thus, for example, he ascribes glory to the only wise God through Jesus Christ (Rom. xvi. 27). The one God is here distinguished from Jesus Christ, for Jesus is the one *through whom* the ascription is made to God. Since He is the one through whom the ascription is made to God, it is plain that He is not identified with God, but is separate from Him. But if He is separate from God, then the apostle would be guilty of a self-contradiction, if, calling God the *only* God, he yet predicated the word *θεός* of Jesus.

Another significant illustration is furnished by 1 Tim. ii. 5 (comp. Gal. iii. 20). "There is one God, one mediator also between God and men, a man Christ Jesus." Here are three separate classes — God, men, and a mediator between them, Christ Jesus. If men are here distinguished from God, so also is Jesus Christ. If the term "mediator" implies that Jesus is separate and distinct from men for whom He mediates, it must also imply that He is separate and distinct from the "one God" for whom He mediates. On both sides, then, He is separate and distinct, but as yet this separateness is not positively defined. Now one might possibly conceive of a mediator between God and men who differed in essence both from men and from God; and from the standpoint of polytheism one might conceive of a mediator between God and men who was himself a god. But we are not left in doubt as to Paul's thought. In harmony with his

statement that there is *one* God, he says of the mediator between God and men, even Jesus Christ, that He is a man (*ἄνθρωπος*). Thus he not only separates between Jesus and God by the word "mediator," but he broadly defines this separation in a twofold manner when, on the one hand, he says there is *one* God, and on the other hand says that the mediator was a *man*.

Again, on two occasions, Paul says that there is one God, and then adds that there is one Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. viii. 6; comp. 1 Cor. xii. 4-6; Eph. iv. 5. The order of names is inverted in the last passage). The passage in Corinthians is especially significant. Paul is here characterizing the Christian faith in contrast to polytheism. Among the heathen there are many gods and many lords; but among believers there is "one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him." By the side of the one God there is the one Lord, Jesus the Messiah. Jesus is here distinguished from God both by the word "one" in the clause "there is one God," and by the function attributed to Him. For while the one God is the ultimate source and end of all things, the one Lord Jesus Christ is a mediator of all things, the channel through which God's purposes are realized.

It remains to notice two passages in which, though God is not explicitly declared to be one, Jesus is yet distinguished from Him. The first of these passages is 1 Cor. iii. 21. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Accordingly, as we belong to Christ, so Christ belongs to God. If we, while belonging to Christ, are thought of as separate from Him, so also is Christ, while belonging to God, thought of as

separate from Him. The second passage is in the same Epistle. Looking out into the future, when death shall have been abolished, the apostle says that "when all things have been subjected unto Him [*i.e.* Christ], then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28). Thus he distinguishes not between the Son and the Father, but between the Son and God. And it is not only this contrast in the subjects that is instructive, but also the contrast in the predicates. For he says that the Son shall be subjected to God, even as by the power of God all things are first to be subjected to the Son. And the divine purpose in this is that God may be *all in all*, the one Supreme Ruler in relation to the Son, as well as in relation to others. He is to be all in all, all in the Son, all in the disciples of the Son. Thus Paul here strikes the same fundamental note as in the Epistle to the Romans, where he declares it to be the purpose of God that believers should be conformed to the image of His Son, that He may be the first-born among many brothers (Rom. viii. 29).

But if Paul saw in Jesus a true man, he also saw in Him a divine character. The first unique feature of this character was *holiness*. The belief of Paul that the holiness of his Master was absolute is explicitly affirmed, and is also implied in statements of such a nature that the implication is as emphatic as any direct utterance could be. It is not affirmed as though it had been denied by any one, but is rather stated as a historical fact which no one called in question. Thus Paul says of Jesus, "Him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf" (2 Cor. v. 21). Nothing less is affirmed in the opening verses of

II. The character of Jesus.
(1) Holiness.

the Epistle to the Romans, where it is said that, according to the flesh, Jesus was born of the seed of David, but according to the spirit of holiness He was powerfully marked off as the Son of God by the resurrection (Rom. i. 4). The "spirit of holiness" in this verse is the spirit of Jesus, as characterized by holiness.¹

But the holiness of Jesus is *implied* in Paul far more frequently than it is expressed, and the implications are of the most positive sort. Thus, in the first place, it is implied when Paul says that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. v. 19), and also when he says that all the fulness, or all the fulness of the Godhead, dwelt in Him (Col. i. 19; ii. 9). Taken by itself, the first statement, that God was in Christ, does not necessarily presuppose the perfect holiness of Christ, for God is also in men who are imperfect (*e.g.* 2 Cor. vi. 16); but in view of verse 21 of the same chapter we are doubtless justified in saying that this language implies the sinlessness of Jesus. But this is more clearly involved in the other conception, that all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him. For, whatever else that "fulness" may include,² Paul makes it plain that it includes the ethical purity of God (Eph. iii. 19; iv. 13).

Again, in the second place, the holiness of Jesus is implied in the fact that He is presented as the supreme ideal of character and life. All the ancient promises of God, centring in a redeemed, holy people, are fulfilled in Him (2 Cor. i. 19). To learn Christ is to see and to depart from iniquity (Eph. iv. 19-20). Beset by sin, men are exhorted to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xiii. 14),

¹ Comp. James Morison, *The Christology of Paul*, Expositor, xi. 458.

² See von Soden, Hand-Kommentar, *Colossians*.

and in so far as they are *in* Him, they are a habitation for the holy God (Eph. ii. 22). Through His indwelling in the heart we are filled unto all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 17, 19), and conformed to the very image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29). But if that image is the goal of our development, it cannot be lacking in holiness.

Finally, in the third place, the holiness of Jesus is implied in the fact that union with Him produces holiness in us. To be baptized into fellowship with Him means that we are to walk in newness of life (Rom. vi. 4). To be joined to Him implies that one will bear fruit to God, and part of that fruit is sanctification (Rom. vii. 4; vi. 22). It is in Him that one is freed from the control of sin (Rom. viii. 2), and it is through fellowship with Him that one is enabled to rise to the heights of divine character (Eph. iii. 17, 19).

But if the fellowship of Jesus develops the soul unto the ultimate possession of God's ideal for it, then Paul must have thought of Jesus as being Himself sinless. One who is morally imperfect may yet by the grace of God help others forward in the way of holiness, but not very much further than he himself has gone. He who is able to help men to attain the ideal must have realized this ideal himself.

Thus we find in Paul's Epistles, implied or expressed, the conviction that Jesus was sinless. He does not seek to *account* for this sinlessness, even as the Gospels do not, but he holds it as a fundamental fact. The sinlessness of Jesus separated Him from the human race to which He belonged — separated Him from it as widely as God Himself is separated from it.

The second unique feature of the character of Jesus is

love. Paul says that this element in his Lord's character passes knowledge (Eph. iii. 19), and he is never weary of exalting it. To no element in the character of Jesus does he refer so frequently, and to none does he ascribe so great importance in the work of redemption. In his thought the love of Jesus was nothing less than the love of God. To see it and know it was to see and know the very love of the invisible Father. Thus he says that *God* commends His love toward us in that *Christ* died (Rom. v. 8), and that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 39). That is to say, in dying for the ungodly, Christ manifested the love of God for men. In Jesus, and especially in the last act of His life, we have a historical visible embodiment of the love of God the invisible.

This love is measured by the fact that Jesus laid down His life for the ungodly (Rom. v. 8), and this measure is too great for any human love. The utmost that human love attains unto is to die for the righteous and good (Rom. v. 7). The love of Jesus transcends the utmost of human love, in that Jesus died for the *ungodly*. Thus it was the cross which taught Paul that in the love of Jesus we see the very love of God. It shows the divine character of His love, because it exhibits it as pure self-sacrifice. Jesus gave *Himself* in contrast to aught that He possessed. He gave Himself to suffer the utmost of pain and shame; and He gave Himself thus for His *enemies*. This love is none other than the love of God. Hence Paul thinks of this as the perfect *standard* of love for the kingdom of heaven (Eph. v. 2, 25, 29). It is the ideal beyond which the human mind cannot rise. And because this love is manifested in a supreme act of sac-

rifice in behalf of each man, it becomes the all-controlling *motive* in life (Gal. ii. 20 ; Rom. viii. 37).

Such are the main aspects of the love of Jesus around which the thought of Paul moves. This love is the very love of God, as the cross witnesses ; and the embodiment of this love in the person of Jesus is the ideal, the fountain, of love for His followers. Hence the love of Jesus, like His holiness, marks Him off from all mankind and associates Him with God. It makes a gulf between Him and men in the sphere of character, just as broad as the gulf between God and men. It does not differentiate His humanity from that of mankind, but only His character ; for we also are capable of love, capable even of a Christlike love.

Thus the character of Jesus in its holiness and love, as seen through the Epistles of Paul, is the same divine character that the Gospels present to us.

This true man, in whom the character of God clearly appeared, was invested with a divine office, the office of Messiah. The historical argument for the Messiahship of Jesus culminated in the resurrection, and this culminating argument is that on which Paul dwells. This is wholly natural in view of Paul's conversion. Unlike the early apostles he had not heard the words of Jesus and seen His great works. He had not become attached to Him by the force of His personal character. There was abundant evidence of Messiahship in the life and death of Jesus, but for Paul this was always overshadowed by his peculiar experience on the way to Damascus. The conviction that Jesus was alive and glorified, changed Paul from a persecutor of the Church into a humble believer. He had supposed

III. The
Messiahship
of Jesus.
(1) The
fact of
Messiahship.
(a) Evidence
of the fact.

that Jesus was a false prophet, and that His body had seen corruption. Therefore the evidence of His resurrection, which came to him on the way to Damascus, was overwhelming. It shattered at once his old thought of Jesus, and put in its place an immovable conviction that He was the Messiah.

To the early disciples the resurrection of Jesus was the last and supreme evidence of His Messiahship; to Paul this evidence was supreme, but it was also first in time. They found the Messiah through the historical Jesus; he found the historical Jesus through the Messiah. Proof of the resurrection was the *end* of the faith of the earlier apostles; but of Paul's faith it was the *beginning*. Accordingly, the resurrection of Jesus had peculiar prominence in Paul's thought. It was this event, he says, by which Jesus was powerfully marked off as the Son of God (Rom. i. 4); and this was also fundamental in the Gospel which he preached. He preached it not only as his own experience, but also as the fulfilment of Scripture, though he does not indicate the Scriptures in which he saw a foreshadowing of the resurrection (I Cor. xv. 4).

The message of Paul was the inference which he drew from the resurrection, and is as clear and positive as was his belief in that great event. This message is the Messiahship of Jesus. It is just the message that we expect from one who had cherished the Old Testament ideals and hopes, for the soul of the Old Testament is its promise of deliverance through the Lord's Anointed. One who saw that promise realized in Jesus, as Paul did, must preach Jesus as the realization of the promise. Again, the message of Paul is just the message we

(b) Prominence of the fact of Messiahship.

should expect from one who knew and accepted the testimony of Jesus regarding Himself, for that testimony is summed up in the claim of Jesus that He came to fulfil the law and the prophets. When, therefore, Paul was convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, his message was clearly outlined for him. The fundamental truth of his life and teaching could not be other than the Messiahship of Jesus. This was for him the fulfilment of God's revelation, and hence the fact that was to revolutionize the world as it had revolutionized his own spirit.

Even a hasty survey of Paul's Letters discloses the fact that they make but one great claim, and elaborate but one great truth, namely, that Jesus is the Messiah; and the most careful analysis only confirms this result.

The central position of the Messiahship of Jesus in Paul's thought may be amply shown by a consideration of the names which he gives to Jesus. The name which is most common and is found in the greatest variety of combination is *Christ*, the Greek equivalent of *Messiah*. This is used with the article 80 times, and without the article 126 times.¹ The use with the article is the earlier. It is that which we usually find in the Gospels, when the question at issue is whether Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. Thus John the Baptist says, "I am not *the* Christ" (John i. 20); Peter says to Jesus, "Thou art *the* Christ" (Matt. xvi. 16); and the high priest asks, "Art thou *the* Christ" (Mark xiv. 61)? Likewise in the Book of Acts, when it is said that Philip preached Christ, the writer says "*the* Christ" (Acts viii. 5).

In all these cases where the article is used the term

¹ All figures are for the Epistles only. Sometimes they are not absolute, but only approximate, on account of the uncertainty of the Greek text.

is an official designation. But later the article was gradually dropped, and the word "Christ" was used as a proper name. This change was a natural result of the preaching of the apostolic age. The great affirmation of that preaching was the Messiahship of Jesus. Since this affirmation was fundamental and so of frequent occurrence, the tendency would be to find the shortest expression for it. Thus the great text, Jesus is the Christ, might easily give rise to the double proper name *Jesus Christ*, and to the use of *Christ* alone as a proper name.

We have seen that Paul uses the word "Christ," with and without the article, about 206 times. We notice in the next place that he uses it in combination with other words, namely, with *Lord* twice and with *Jesus* 174 times. Paul alone of New Testament writers (Acts xxiv. 24, being Luke's narrative, is hardly an exception, as Luke was influenced by Paul) puts the name *Christ* first. He writes *Christ Jesus* a little oftener than *Jesus Christ*.¹ This order accords with his *unique experience*. The vision on the way to Damascus put the Messiahship of Jesus in the foreground of his thought. This compound proper name, Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus, which Paul uses, on the average, twice in every chapter of his Letters (87 chapters, 174 times), is the text of apostolic preaching, an epitome of apostolic faith. It contains the one great assertion that Paul made in regard to Jesus; it is the nucleus of his practical Christology.

To sum up his usage of the word "Christ," we find that he uses it in combination with another name 176 times; by itself, with and without the article 206 times, 382 times in all. Thus it is found, on an average, nearly

¹ The order is uncertain in 17 passages. Of the remaining 157 passages, 73 have Jesus Christ and 84 have Christ Jesus.

four and a half times in every chapter of Paul's writings.

Another title of Jesus which illustrates the prominence of His Messiahship in the letters of Paul, is *Lord* (*κύριος*). This occurs twice with the name *Christ*, 23 times with *Jesus*, and 67 times with *Jesus Christ* or *Christ Jesus*. Then it is found many times alone. It is not always possible to say, when Paul uses this word alone, whether he refers to Jesus or to God; but in the great majority of cases, perhaps 140 in round numbers, the reference seems to be to Jesus.¹ Thus Paul calls Jesus *Lord* about 232 times, or an average of two and a half times in every chapter.

Paul makes it very plain what he means by *Lord*. Thus he declares, "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 3). Again, he says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9). And once more, "Masters (*κύριοι*), render unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master (*κύριος*) in heaven" (Col. iv. 1).

Lord is thus seen to be a synonym of *master* and *ruler*. To confess Jesus as Lord is to confess Him as our Master, our Ruler, whom we will obey (comp. Matt. xxiii. 10). To take this attitude toward Him is to become a Christian (Acts xvi. 31). Now the idea of lordship is, in Paul, closely associated with that of Messiahship. To believe that Jesus is the Messiah, marks a man off as a Christian (Acts xvii. 3); to say that Jesus is Lord does the same. To accept Jesus as

¹ Instances where the reference to Jesus is sure: Gal. i. 19; Eph. iv. 5; Phil. iv. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xi. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 12.

Messiah is not different from accepting Him as Lord. Yet the two words *Messiah* and *Lord* are clearly discriminated. It is plain that Paul does not identify them, for he often uses them together in a single compound name, as the *Lord Jesus Christ*. The two terms differ in this respect, that the Lordship of Jesus is a necessary inference from His Messiahship. He is Lord *because* He is Messiah. The word *Messiah* refers to office, while *Lord* is simply a word of relation.

There is yet another title of Jesus, used by Paul, that conveys the idea of Messiahship, that is, *Son of God*. This is not common in Paul, even as it is not common anywhere in the New Testament. The full form, "The Son of God," occurs but four times (Rom. i. 4; 2 Cor. i. 19; Gal. ii. 20; Eph. iv. 13); *His Son*, where "His," refers to God, occurs nine times (Rom. i. 3, 9; v. 10; viii. 29; 1 Cor. i. 9; Gal. i. 16; iv. 4, 6; 1 Thess. i. 10); *His own Son* occurs twice (Rom. viii. 3, 32); *The Son of His Love* once (Col. i. 13), and *The Son* once (1 Cor. xv. 28). Thus, with varying expression, Paul calls Jesus the Son of God seventeen times. The name therefore occurs less than one twentieth as often as the name *Christ*.

The main idea of this term, as used by Paul, is quite clear. He employs it interchangeably with *Christ*. Thus, in Acts xvii. 3, he argues that the resurrection proves Jesus to be the *Messiah*, and in Rom. i. 4, the resurrection proves that He is the *Son of God*; and in both places Paul speaks of Him as the fulfilment of Scripture. This puts the general equivalence of the terms beyond question. Two other passages may be noted in this connection. In Col. i. 13, Paul speaks of Jesus as *the Son of His Love*, that is, God's love. This

designation is not different from that of the Gospels, "Thou art my beloved Son" (Mark i. 11), and like that must be regarded as based on Ps. ii. 7, and as a Messianic title. In Gal. iv. 4, Paul says that, "when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son . . . made under the law." Here it is plain that *Son of God* designates the one who is foretold in the Old Testament, and who in the New Testament is usually called *Messiah* or *Christ* (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 20-28; Eph. iv. 13; 2 Cor. i. 19). Therefore we say that Paul's usage of the term *Son of God*, like that of the Gospels, shows that it was a Messianic title. It of course does not follow that this term is wholly identical with *Messiah*, and has just the same associations. Of the two, the name *Son of God* may more directly suggest the character of Jesus than does the name *Messiah*, and it may also be better suited than that to express the thought of God's love for Jesus (Col. i. 13), and to measure the greatness of His sacrifice in giving Him for the world (Rom. viii. 3, 32). In support of this view, one might cite the usage of calling believers *sons of God* (e.g. Rom. viii. 14, 19). However, we cannot say that Paul laid any particular stress on the ethical suggestion of the term *Son of God*, for he plainly preferred the name *Christ*.

This survey of Paul's usage of the names given to Jesus sets in a clear light his thought of Messiahship, and amply justifies the statement that this is the central conception in all his teaching.¹

¹ A recognition of the facts which have just been presented makes it impossible to hold with Fairbairn, *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 307, that the determinative idea in Paul's system is the filial relation of Christ in distinction from His Messiahship. The use of the title *Son of God*, which is the basis of this view, is, as we have shown, quite secondary.

We have already seen that Paul thought of the character of Jesus, especially in holiness and love, as nothing less than divine. To attain to the fulness of Christ is, for him, the same as to be filled unto all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19; iv. 13). Now it is manifest that Paul regarded this divine character as fundamental to the Messianic work; in other words, that he could not have conceived of the Messianic work as being done by one in whom the character of God was not manifested. Thus the sinlessness of Jesus was fundamental if He was to be an acceptable offering in behalf of sinners (2 Cor. v. 21). Doubtless also Paul would not have thought of Jesus as a *mediator* between God and men in regard to sin, had He not been without sin (1 Tim. ii. 5). Nor unless sinless could Paul have thought of Him as the sphere within which men become sanctified (1 Cor. i. 30; vi. 11), and as the one in whom we are a habitation for the holy God (Eph. ii. 22).

In like manner, it is plain that, in Paul's thought, the love of Jesus also was fundamental to His Messianic work. For, in the first place, it was love that led Him to lay down His life on the cross, that act in which the apostle saw the culmination of His service as the Saviour (Eph. v. 2, 25; Rom. v. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 16). Then, again, it is the consciousness of Jesus' love, and therewith the consciousness of the love of the Father, that furnishes the great motive in the new and upward life (2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. viii. 37, 39; Gal. ii. 20). It seems, therefore, that, for Paul, a character manifesting divine love was inseparable from Messiahship; that one could not be the Messiah unless the love of God found perfect expression through Him. Hence the personal character of Jesus, especially His holiness and His love, was fundamental

in the Messianic equipment. It is natural that this truth is assumed by Paul rather than discussed, for, first, according to the prophetic picture of the Messiah, He is the supreme manifestation of Jehovah (Is. ix. 6; liii. 4-7); and second, the narrative of the life and teaching of Jesus, with which believers were familiar, showed a character that was actually perfect in holiness and love. All who knew of Jesus — and it was such to whom Paul wrote — knew that He was unlike all other men, that His purity and goodness were wholly unique. A teacher, therefore, who is not writing a theological treatise but simply letters on religion, may naturally assume, as Paul does, that the character of Jesus was the fundamental equipment for the Messianic work which He accomplished.

A second element in the Messianic equipment was *knowledge*. Less stress falls on this than on the ethical element, but at the same time Paul ascribes *(δ)* Knowledge to it great importance. Thus he sums up the gift of God in Christ in the two words *power* and *wisdom* (1 Cor. i. 24), and then a little later he drops the word *power*, and says that Christ was made to us *wisdom* from God (1 Cor. i. 30). This wisdom is then viewed under three aspects as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Thus, as far as our salvation is concerned, we have in Christ the very wisdom of God, just as we have in Him the very love of God.

This wisdom is sometimes set forth under the figure of *light*. Thus Paul assumes that it is the function of the Gospel to give light, the very light of God (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6), and teaches that they who are in the Lord by faith are light, that is, wise with a heavenly wisdom (Eph. v. 8; 1 Thess. v. 5). When writing to a church

in which some fancied that there was a higher knowledge than that of the Gospel, Paul declared that in Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. ii. 3). He elsewhere speaks of these treasures as *unsearchable riches*, and identifies them with the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 8-10).

Paul's thought regarding the spiritual wisdom of Christ appears also in some of those passages which contemplate the ideal of the Christian life. His prayer for his readers, on one occasion, is that the word of Christ may dwell in them richly, that is, the word which Christ spoke when on earth (Col. iii. 16). When that word dwells in the heart richly, then one result is that the heart has all wisdom, that is, all spiritual wisdom. Again, when Paul says that it is his supreme aim to know Christ, and that one purpose of the Church is to help men to attain unto the knowledge of the Son of God, it is implied that, in his thought, the wisdom of God is manifested in Christ (Phil. iii. 8; Eph. iv. 13). Paul does not ask how Jesus came into possession of supreme spiritual wisdom, but the fact that He possessed it is unquestionable. That this possession was an essential part of His Messianic equipment is involved in the very conception of salvation which Paul had. For he thought of the work of Christ as the manifestation of the divine will (*e.g.* Eph. i. 9; Col. i. 9; iv. 12; 1 Thess. v. 18); but if Jesus manifested the divine will, He must of course have *known* that will. Likewise the fundamental conception of Christ as a *mediator* between God and men, the one *through* whom all things are, as God is the one *from* whom all things are, shows that, in Paul's thought, the equipment of Jesus for the Messianic work involved, of necessity, a unique knowledge of God.

The third and last element in the Messianic equipment was *authority*. This is implied in that title which Paul most frequently applies to Jesus, namely, (c) *Author-the Messiah*, that is, the *Anointed*. For to be anointed by God for any work implies, as a necessary correlate, that God gives authority according to the nature of the work. If the work is that of a prophet, the anointed one receives prophetic authority; if it is that of a king, the anointed one receives royal authority.

Paul thought of Jesus as anointed to fulfil the prophecies of the Old Testament, that is, to be the redeemer of the world, and this unique anointing implied unique authority — authority commensurate with the work. But this unique authority which is implied in the very name *Messiah*, is also sometimes affirmed. Thus it is affirmed, for example, in the statement that Christ is seated at the right hand of God (Rom. viii. 34; Col. iii. 1; Eph. i. 20). It is affirmed also in the statement that He is the head of all principality and power (Col. ii. 10), and far above all rule and authority (Eph. i. 21). It is affirmed in the statement that He is the head of every believer and the head of the Church (1 Cor. xi. 3; Eph. i. 22; v. 23). And finally, this unique authority is affirmed whenever Jesus is called the *Lord*, or the *one Lord* (1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. iv. 5; Rom. i. 7). Thus it appears that the authority given to Jesus is prominently asserted in the writings of Paul.

It is to be noticed that Paul does not speak of the authority of the *historical* Jesus. He makes no allusion to that baptism of Jesus by the Spirit, which is so prominent in the Synoptic Gospels, and which involves the bestowal of Messianic authority; nor does he allude to the claim which Jesus Himself laid to unique authority,

as authority to work miracles, to forgive sin, to bestow life, and to judge men. Paul speaks only of the unique authority of the risen and glorified Jesus, perhaps because in his own conversion and Christian experience he had come into such close contact with the glorified One, while he had not known the Jesus of history. And, furthermore, in explaining the usage of Paul, it is to be borne in mind that, while Jesus in His earthly life claimed unique authority, He did not exercise it in such a spiritual and striking manner as He did after His resurrection. His *character* indeed was perfectly manifested in His life and death, but the evidence of *authority* was not apparent to many souls; and in the hour when His inner spirit was most clearly revealed, He seemed to be most destitute of authority. Hence we can understand how Paul dates the exercise of unique authority by Christ from the time of His resurrection and ascension.

The authority of Christ is *given* to Him by God. This is, of course, involved in the fact that it was God who anointed Jesus to be the Christ. The authority comes from the same source as the anointing. This truth finds incidental expression when Paul says that God *gave* to Jesus the name which is above every name, that is, the name *Lord* (Phil. ii. 9-11). This same passage in Philippians contains the only explicit utterance of Paul in regard to the ground or reason for the bestowal of Messianic authority upon Jesus. According to this, the gift of the name *Lord* was ethically conditioned. God exalted Jesus highly because Jesus had deeply humbled Himself in the death on the cross. Thus Paul saw in Jesus a supreme illustration of the principle contained in the Lord's own words, "He that humbleth him-

self shall be exalted." This word in Philippians which makes the gift of Messianic authority depend upon Jesus' self-sacrifice accords with the prominence which Paul gives in his Letters to the *character* of Jesus.

It remains to speak of the *nature* of the authority which was given to Jesus. The very term *Messianic* implies a definition of this. The authority of Jesus is authority to do the Messianic work. Now the work of the Messiah is variously described by Paul. Thus Christ came to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15), to reconcile them to God (Rom. v. 11), to put the law of faith and love in place of the law of works (Gal. vi. 2; Rom. iii. 27), and to develop in men a holy and loving character (Eph. ii. 10; iv. 13; Phil. iii. 14). His work, therefore, was moral and religious, and hence Messianic authority is authority commensurate with this spiritual work. Whatever the work of redemption requires outside the human will, Jesus is authorized of God to be and to do. He is head over all things to the Church (Eph. i. 22), king of the kingdom of redemption, over which He is to reign until all things are subjected to Him (1 Cor. xv. 24-25).¹ His authority, then, is in the spiritual sphere, and is chiefly manifest, for the present at least, by spiritual means.

To sum up the thought of Paul on the Messiahship of Jesus, we say that the fact of His Messiahship rests primarily on His resurrection, and is central in all the apostle's teaching; and that the Messianic equipment consisted in a character of divine holiness and love,

¹ In view of the Messianic character and office of Jesus, we may say with Somerville, Bruce, and others, that He is one with God to the religious consciousness, that He is the perfect representative of God, and as such is to us as God.

the possession of supreme spiritual wisdom, and the possession of authority commensurate with the work of redemption.

In the later thought of Paul regarding Jesus there are what may be termed speculative elements, that is to say, elements that are not directly contained in his own Christian experience or in the historical work of Jesus. Such elements are clearly found only in the Prison Epistles — Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians — though there are a few passages elsewhere which it is possible to interpret in line with these. Therefore we have to do here with an isolated phenomenon rather than with a fundamental feature of Paul's teaching as a whole.

The passages which are speculative in character are, as might be expected, difficult of interpretation. Some of them, as that in Phil. ii., have been the scene of endless, and often bitter, controversies. This fact, however, should not debar any student from their investigation, though it may well suggest that all investigation of these texts will be fruitless which is not modest in character and uncontroversial in spirit. These speculative passages may be arranged under three heads: first, those which concern Christ's relation to God; second, those which concern Christ's relation to the universe; and third, those which concern Christ's relation to believers.

(1) Christ's relation to God. First, the passages which concern Christ's relation to God. It is true, in general, as Somerville has said,¹ that Paul's interpretation of Christ does not take account of the metaphysical nature of His person, but of His significance for the moral and religious life of man. There is perhaps only

¹ *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 34.

one passage in his writings which can be said to form a clear exception to this statement. But before considering this passage, we may notice some other statements of Paul which have usually been held to be speculative and metaphysical, but which *need* not be so understood. First, there are several passages in which the doctrine of preëxistence has sometimes been found. It is found in the passage where Paul says that God *sent* His Son (*πέμπειν*), or *sent Him forth* (*ἐξαποστέλλειν*) (Gal. iv. 4; Rom. viii. 3). These expressions, however, do not in themselves suggest the preëxistence of the Son, for Scripture speaks of men as *sent* or *sent forth* from God. Thus Moses was sent to Pharaoh (Ex. vii. 16), Jeremiah and all the prophets were sent to Israel (Jer. i. 7; xxv. 4). Thus, also, in the New Testament, Paul was sent from God (Acts xxvi. 17.) So the statement that Jesus was sent from God need not be supposed to have had any other meaning in Paul's thought than that of divine authorization. Again, preëxistence is found in the statement that Christ Jesus *came into the world* to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15). But this language also has no necessary implication of preëxistence, for the very same expression is used in regard to human birth (*e.g.* John vi. 14; xvi. 21), and in regard to the historical mission of men, both good and bad (*e.g.* John xvii. 18; 2 John 7). Third, there is the word of Paul about a *spiritual rock* that followed Israel through the wilderness (1 Cor. x. 4). The reference is to Ex. xvii. 1-6, Num. xx. 1-11. When the Jews were in Rephidim, they had no water. Moses cried unto Jehovah, and was told to smite the rock with his rod. When he did so, water came forth.

Now it seems plain that we must regard this as a symbolical saying. It is incredible that the apostle thought

of the preëxistent Christ as changed into a material rock, which Moses smote with a material rod, and from which material water came forth. This conception is grotesque and gross. It is moreover unnecessary, for the passage admits of an easy interpretation if taken symbolically. All that Paul necessarily affirms is that the miraculous gift of water to Israel stood in vital connection with the Messiah who had been promised. If it had not been for the Messiah, they would not have had the water. It was by virtue of God's covenant with the people that He wrought in them and with them as He did.

There remains yet one passage which, with reference to preëxistence, is in itself ambiguous. It is that of 2 Cor. viii. 9: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became¹ poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich." It is plain that nothing in this verse *requires* us to go outside the historical career of Jesus for its explanation. Hence many interpreters, including Martin Luther, have taken this view of it. We may think of the private life of Jesus, or of His early public career, when He taught and healed in Galilee surrounded by enthusiastic multitudes, as a period when He was "rich" in comparison with the day of His sufferings and death. His becoming "poor" in order that we might become rich, was His going down to an ignominious death in our behalf. The contrast furnished by His earthly career is surely strong enough to justify the language of the apostle. At the same time it is equally plain that Paul *might* have used this language differently, and have

¹ Drummond in *International Handbooks to the New Testament* translates *ἐπρὶς ἕσθαι* "was poor," and thinks that the poverty of Jesus was contemporary with His "being rich."

thought of a period of preëxistence as the time when Christ was "rich." This passage therefore must be counted with those which are in themselves indeterminate.

We come now to a consideration of Phil. ii. 5-8, in which Paul speaks of a preëxistent Christ, and of His incarnation. It is important to notice at the outset that, whatever be the content of this difficult passage, it is not presented for its *own sake*, as an essential part of Christian doctrine. It is incidental to Paul's main thought. He is seeking to teach humility, not Christology (Phil. ii. 5). The motive to humility which is here brought forward is the example of Christ, and it is in the elaboration of this example that he speaks of prehistoric relations. On another occasion he appeals to the *historic* example of Jesus for a motive to humility (Rom. xv. 3). This then is a fact of primary importance for our judgment of the passage, that its main purport is not theological but ethical. It sets out to teach humility, not a doctrine of the preëxistent Christ. It does indeed speak of His preëxistence, but only to set in a stronger light the virtue of a humble mind.

It is to be noticed further that there are several points in this passage in Philippians which still remain obscure. There are no less than five expressions which Paul never uses elsewhere, and at least four of these are of somewhat uncertain significance (*μορφή, ἀρπαγμός, ἴσα, κενούσθαι, ὑπερυψοῦν*). While, however, the passage, even in its leading words, is not fully interpretable, and therefore is hardly available for dogmatic purposes, it *seems* to involve the following points: (1) that the Christ preëxisted in a divine form; (2) that the consciousness of the preëxistent Christ was not the consciousness of God; (3) that the preëxistent Christ did

not enjoy divine honor; (4) that the preëxistent Christ aimed to secure divine honor through the deepest self-abasement; and (5) that God exalted the historic Christ because of His self-abasement. It is to be noticed that in this passage the preëxistent Christ is as sharply discriminated from God as is the risen Christ of history. For He is thought of as contemplating a position of honor equal to that of God (vs. 6). It is not said that the Son contemplated securing the honor of the Father, but that Christ contemplated the honor of *God*. Again, the discrimination is seen in this, that the preëxistent Christ chooses a certain course of action in order thereby to receive from God the gift of *Lordship*. It is to be noticed further that the honor to which the historical Christ attains is vastly higher than that of the preëxistent Christ. The historical Christ reaches a certain equality with God in that He is recognized as *Lord*; the preëxistent Christ did not enjoy this equality, but is thought of as *contemplating* its attainment (vs. 6). Now as this *higher* honor of the historical Christ is said to be a *gift* of God (vs. 9), so in like manner the lesser glory of the preëxistent Christ was probably regarded by Paul as a gift of God. Thus it is implied that the preëxistent Christ was dependent upon God, even as Paul teaches in regard to the historical Christ (Phil. ii. 9-11; 1 Cor. xv. 28).

We inquire now how this speculative thought regarding a preëxistent Christ stands related to the common conceptions of Paul. Is it in harmony with those conceptions?¹ Our reply is both affirmative and negative. Affirmatively, we may say first, that it is in harmony

¹ For a modern defence of the theological interpretation of this passage, see E. H. Gifford, *The Incarnation*. For a view wholly counter to the

with Paul's teaching that there is *one* God; and second, in harmony with his correlative teaching that God is the God of Christ. Negatively, we must say that, if the passage teaches a real preëxistence of Christ, as it is commonly understood to do, then it does not appear to be in harmony with Paul's explicit teaching in regard to the human origin of the Messiah. For if the Messiah in His entire humanity was descended from David, as Paul unquestionably teaches, then it is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that Paul could have thought Him to be the incarnation of a personally preëxistent Christ.

One is therefore forced to ask whether the Philippian passage is not capable of a somewhat different interpretation, which shall bring it into line with the plain teaching of Paul. There is, of course, a presumption that it is not an irreconcilable element in that teaching, a presumption that springs from the general harmoniousness of Paul's moral and religious thought.

Now if we go for help to the Old Testament and to Jewish thought contemporary with the New Testament, especially the thought of the Alexandrian school, both suggest one and the same solution of the Philippian passage. Both suggest that this passage concerns the divine ideal of the Messiah. Their suggestion is, first, by silence, for neither in the Old Testament nor in Jewish writings contemporary with the New Testament is there any clear teaching of the real preëxistence of the Messiah.¹ Their suggestion is also by speech,

ordinary theological interpretation of this passage in Philippians, see Drummond in the *International Handbooks to the New Testament*, ii. 370-377.

¹ See Gilbert, *The Revelation of Jesus*, pp. 211-225; also V. H. Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 131; James Drummond, *The Jewish Messiah*, p. 290.

for, first, in the Old Testament and still more frequently in Jewish writings contemporary with the New Testament, we have the conception of divine ideas which, at some time, come to be embodied in the phenomena of religion. Thus, for example, Moses made the tabernacle according to the *pattern* which Jehovah had showed him (Ex. xxv. 9), that is, the ideal of a holy tabernacle. And in Philo, the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, we have abundant illustration of the point under discussion. Thus he says that God made all things according to an incorporeal model;¹ that God impressed upon the entire world an image and idea;² and that every man in regard to his intellect is an impress of the divine reason, a fragment or ray of that blessed nature.³ Again, what is still more significant, Philo at times speaks of the Logos as in some sense a visible realization of the image of God, for he calls him "the eldest of angels," "the archangel of many names," "the man according to God's image," "the shadow of God," and "charioteer of the divine powers."⁴

And, second, both in the Old Testament and in Jewish writings contemporary with the New Testament we find qualities of God hypostatized and treated as distinct personalities. Thus, in the famous passage of Proverbs, *Wisdom* is personified and speaks. She says she was formed from everlasting, that she was with Jehovah as a master-workman, that she rejoiced before Him and rejoiced with the sons of men (Prov. viii.). But we do not understand this passage as teaching the real, objec-

¹ *De opificio mundi*, 6; *De mundo*, 1.

² *De somniis*, ii. 6.

³ *De opificio mundi*, 51.

⁴ *De confusione linguarum*, 28; *De legum sacrarum alleg.*, iii. 31; *De profugis*, 19.

tive, independent existence of Wisdom. It is regarded rather as a highly poetical personification of a divine attribute. Again, it is said in *The Wisdom of Solomon* that Wisdom delivered a holy people from oppressors, that it led them in a marvellous way and that it became for them a covering (*σκεπή*) by day and a starry flame by night (x. 15-17). Philo in like manner says that the rock which followed Israel was a manifestation of Wisdom.¹ Thus, all these writers personified the Wisdom of God and treated it as an independent being.

If now in accord with the Old Testament and later Jewish writings we regard the passage in Philippians as contemplating the Messianic ideal, it comes at once into harmony with the general thought of Paul. The passage then affirms that in the historical Christ there was manifested the divine and eternal ideal of the Messiah.² The very wisdom of God for man's redemption and the divine spirit of self-abasement were incarnated in Him.

The ascription of personal attributes to this ideal is parallel to the personification of wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, and a thing not to be wondered at in a passage which, like Phil. i. 21-ii. 11, is full of the most exalted feeling of devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. This interpretation of the passage in Philippians seems worthy of acceptance because it is directly suggested by Jewish thought, and because it harmonizes this passage with the general teaching of the apostle.

¹ *De sacrarum legum allegoriarum*, i. 82, 10, Mangey's edition.

² Gould, *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 96-99, advances the view that Paul regarded Jesus as "an incarnation of the Spirit of God." The Spirit was "the form of Christ's preëxistent nature." The chief support for this view is found in 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.

Regarding Christ's relation to the universe, the first point to be noticed connects itself naturally with the conception of a preëxistent Christ which has just been considered. For it is now said of this preëxistent Christ that He is the first-born of all creation, and that He is before all things (Col. i. 15, 17). Accordingly, His preëxistence is fixed with reference to the created universe. It is not suggested here that His preëxistence was *eternal*, but only that it antedated the creation of the world. The same statement is made in Proverbs in regard to Wisdom (viii. 22-23).

This assertion of Paul in regard to the preëxistent Christ was called out by the error which was threatening the Colossian church. Some persons were in danger of abandoning the headship of Christ, and of claiming that they knew of divine manifestations which were superior to Him (Col. ii. 3, 19).

The second point in the relation of the preëxistent Christ to the universe is that all things are created *in*, *through*, and *unto* Him (*ἐν αὐτῷ, δι' αὐτοῦ, εἰς αὐτόν*) (Col. i. 16-17; Eph. i. 10; 1 Cor. viii. 6). The relation expressed by the preposition *in* is plainly not *spatial*. The preëxistent Christ was not for Paul a place in which the universe was created. Regarded as a place, Paul could not have said that all things were *through* Him and *unto* Him. Moreover, this expression *in Christ*, which is frèquent in Paul's writings, is never used spatially, but always with a much more significant meaning. It denotes a close and vital relationship. The statement that all things were created *in Him* is parallel to that other statement that believers are created *in Him* for good works, and to the statement that we were chosen

in Him (Eph. i. 4; ii. 10). To be chosen in Christ means to be chosen *in view* of Christ, *on the ground* of Christ;¹ that is to say, the choice was conditioned on Him. So in like manner our new creation by God is *in Christ*, that is, conditioned on Him (Eph. ii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 17). In this profound sense we are to understand the statement that all things were created *in Christ*. When Paul says that all things hold together in Christ (*συνέστηκεν*) (Col. i. 17),² that is but an inference from the fundamental thought of their creation as a creation conditioned on Him. And if even their *creation* by God was conditioned upon Christ, then it would follow that their preservation and the historical use made of them must be conditioned upon Him likewise.

Further, Paul says that all things were created *through* Christ (*δι' αὐτοῦ*) (Col. i. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 6). He never says that creation was *by* Him or *from* Him. Christ is never called *creator*. The one from whom all things come into existence is God (1 Cor. viii. 6). The relation of Christ to the universe is expressed by the word *through*. This denotes agency. God created all things through the agency of the preëxistent Christ. The character of the agency depends upon the character of the preëxistence. If that was personal, so was the agency; if ideal, then the agency was the agency of the ideal.³ The term itself simply affirms agency.

By the agency of the Messianic ideal in creation we mean that God put forth His creative power under the limitations of this ideal. His power flowed, as it were,

¹ Comp. von Soden in the *Hand-Kommentar*.

² Philo calls the Logos the *δεσμός* of the universe.

³ Briggs, *The Messiah of the Apostles*, p. 520, says that we cannot be certain that any more than ideal preëxistence is taught in 1 Cor. viii. 6.

through this channel. In other words, Paul thought of the universe as bearing the stamp of the Messiah. How he would have defined this stamp we do not know. He simply affirms, but does not describe, the Messianic agency in creation. He does not mention it for its own sake, but only as a fact which exalts the Messiah. We may, however, suppose that he thought of the Messianic agency in creation as the agency of those attributes which he saw in Christ—holiness, wisdom, and redemptive love.

Finally, Paul says that all things were created *unto* Christ. The same thought is expressed in other words when he says that God purposed *to sum up* all things in Christ (Eph. i. 10). This is parallel to what Paul says of Christ's relation to the new spiritual creation. God foreordained believers to be conformed to the image of His *Son*, that He might be the first-born among many brothers, that is, might be first in honor (Rom. viii. 29). Thus God is said to have had the glory of Christ in view in the work of redemption. That is the main thought also when Paul says that all things were created *unto* Him, and that God purposed to *sum up* all things in Christ. And this lies near to the thought that creation was *through* Him. For if creation was through the Messiah, if it took His stamp, then it must ever bear witness to Him, and the statement follows naturally that He is head *over all things* to the Church (Eph. i. 22). All things are unto Him and serve Him. And when the work of redemption is complete, then it will be true that humanity and the angelic world, as well as the material universe, is summed up in Him. His preëminence in all things, those of grace as well as those of nature, will be recognized (Col. i. 18). This preëmi-

nence, however, is bestowed by God; and God, not Christ, is the ultimate end of creation and redemption (1 Cor. viii. 6; xv. 28; Eph. iv. 6; Rom. xi. 36). The supreme and final goal is that God may be all in all.

The relation of Christ to believers and of believers to Christ is, for Paul, almost exclusively matter of experience or of necessary inference from historical facts. In one point however it transcends history and experience. Paul says that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4. Comp. Rom. viii. 29), and he speaks of an eternal purpose of God in Christ regarding our salvation (Eph. iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9). He is writing for the encouragement of believers, and he tells them in substance that their salvation in Christ is as complete and secure as an eternal forethought and prearrangement of God could make it.

(3) Christ's
relation to
believers.

The statement that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world means that our choice was conditioned on Him. God chose us to a blameless life, and foreordained us unto adoption only as He saw Christ and our relation to Him (Eph. i. 4-5).

We have now surveyed the Christological data in Paul which are speculative in character. They number scarcely a dozen passages, and only one of these exceeds a single verse in length. Their utterances in regard to Christ are all found to be capable of being harmonized with the general teaching of the apostle. The importance of these speculative conceptions has often been overestimated. The simple fact that they occupy so little space in the writings of Paul is sufficient evidence that they cannot be made fundamental in any theology which claims for itself the

Conclusion.

authority of the apostle. As we have said, they are speculative rather than historical, but the Gospel which Paul preached is clearly historical rather than speculative. We can do no greater wrong to Paul, and can deal no deadlier blow to his legitimate influence than by refusing to regard the emphasis which he laid upon different aspects of truth. The great assertions of his preaching on the office and work of Christ are unmistakable; it is only the points which are seldom touched and which are manifestly incidental that are obscure.

CHAPTER II

MAN'S NEED OF THE MESSIAH

PAUL saw the root of man's need of Christ in the fact of sin — in sin that degrades and slays the soul (Rom. i. 18-32 ; vii. 11), in sin that alienates from the life of God and exposes to His wrath (Eph. iv. ⁽¹⁾ Sin. 8 ; Rom. i. 18), in sin from which the Jews under the Old Dispensation were not free (Gal. iii. 24), and from which the law written upon the heart of the Gentiles had in the main been unable to deliver (Rom. i. 18-32). The depth and extent of the human need are measured by the significance and extent of sin.

As to its nature, sin is exaltation of self in enmity to God. The "man of sin," that is, the man who is the very incarnation of sin, is described as one who exalts himself and opposes God (2 Thess. ii. 3). He carries this self-exaltation so far that he even sits in the sanctuary, setting himself forth as God. It is plain that his character is one of radical opposition to God, from the fact that his manifestation is said to be according to the working of Satan.

Now what sin is in the "man of sin," it is essentially in every sinner. The apostle recognizes differences of degree in sin, but not of kind. Every man is in germ, potentially, a "man of sin," whose coming is according to the working of Satan, as he is potentially a son of

God. But in the "man of sin" evil is full grown. All restraint is thrown off, and sin's innermost character is completely expressed.

The distinctive mark of the pre-Christian state of any man is living unto himself (2 Cor. v. 15), in contrast with the Christian state in which man lives to Christ. That is to say, the essence of the state of alienation from God is selfishness. When Paul says that the work of the apostles, or the aim of the Gospel, is to bring every thought of men into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. x. 5), it is plainly implied that rebellion against God characterizes those who are out of Christ (comp. Rom. vii. 23). The unrenewed are enemies in their mind (Col. i. 21), and sons of disobedience (Eph. ii. 1; v. 6). The purpose of the flesh, that is, the purpose of the natural man, is pride and enmity against God (2 Cor. i. 17; Rom. viii. 6-8). The flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other (Gal. iii. 3; v. 17). These fundamental passages all agree with the picture in 2 Thessalonians as regards the essential character of sin. It is exaltation of self in opposition to God; in a word, it is selfishness.

It is important to notice that Paul uses the word *flesh* (*σάρξ*) in widely differing senses. It denotes the solid parts of the body as contrasted with the blood (1 Cor. xv. 50; Gal. i. 16; Eph. vi. 12); it denotes the entire material substance of man (Rom. ii. 28; Col. ii. 5); it denotes man as a whole, body and spirit, but man as perishable and weak (Rom. iii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 29). It is also employed in a comprehensive moral sense. This is its most frequent use (*e.g.* Gal. iii. 3). As a moral term it occupies a large place in Paul, as appears from passages like the follow-

ing. He says that the unregenerate man is in the flesh, while the Christian is not in the flesh (Rom. vii. 5; viii. 9). No good thing dwells in the flesh, for with the flesh man serves the law of sin (Rom. vii. 18, 25). Walking after the flesh is the way to death, for one who thus walks cannot be subject to the law of God (Rom. viii. 13). The mind of the flesh is death (Rom. viii. 6-7), the purpose of the flesh is pride (2 Cor. i. 19); to the flesh appertain passions and lusts (Gal. v. 24; Eph. ii. 3), and all the works of the flesh are evil (Gal. v. 19-21). The Holy Spirit is the antithesis of the flesh, and that power by which alone the flesh can be overcome (Gal. v. 16-17).

In all these passages, and in many others, the word is employed as a moral term, though not always with the same breadth of meaning. When speaking of one who is not a Christian, the word is equal to the "old man," or it is the "me," in which dwells no good thing (Rom. vii. 18). It is man, in so far as he is alienated from God. Therefore it is plain how Paul, though saying of the Christian in general, that he is not in the flesh, may yet see something of the flesh in him. Some of the works of the flesh are manifest in those whom Paul addresses as Christians (*e.g.* 1 Cor. i. 10; iii. 3). In such cases the word is equivalent to "old leaven" (1 Cor. v. 7), that is to say, it denotes everything in the believer which is hostile to the Spirit.

Paul does not think of the flesh, the material basis of man, as being in itself sinful, though it is under the control of sin and executes sin's desires (Rom. vi. 6; vii. 15-18). It is natural that "flesh" should be used as though itself sinful, since sin expresses itself in large measure *through* the physical flesh. So when Paul

speaks of the body ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$)¹ of sin (Rom. vi. 6), and says that its destruction is one object of our being crucified with Christ, he plainly does not mean the physical body as such, for with this the believer is to serve Christ till Christ shall call him hence; but what he means is the physical body as the servant of sin. This function of the body is to be destroyed.² So the deliverance which Paul craved from the body of spiritual death was a deliverance from the body as belonging to death (Rom. vii. 24). But the body as such is a temple of God, a member of Christ, to be redeemed and glorified (1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 15; Rom. viii. 23; Phil. iii. 21). Paul did not wish to be delivered from this, but from the death which dominated it.

But further in regard to the view held by some, that in Paul's thought the material basis of man is in itself sinful, these facts are to be considered. First, he says that sin *entered into the world* at a certain time in the history of Adam, and that it entered in through the will of Eve and Adam (Rom. v. 12; 2 Cor. xi. 3). He would hardly have spoken on this wise if he had thought that sin pertained of necessity to man's flesh. And second, the case of Christ who was in the flesh and yet knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21) is antagonistic to the view that Paul thought of sin as a necessary accompaniment of the flesh.³

¹ The Greek words $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\kappa\grave{\alpha}$ differ as *form* and *material*. Hence $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ is much more comprehensive. Further, but in line with this general distinction, $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\kappa\grave{\alpha}$ belongs to the earthly life only, $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ to the heavenly life as well (Phil. iii. 21). It is also to be noticed that the conception of *organization* belongs to $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ rather than to $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\kappa\grave{\alpha}$. All Christians form one $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ in Christ (Rom. xii. 5). Each Christian is an organic part of this $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ (1 Cor. xii. 27).

² Comp. Morison, *St. Paul's Teaching on Sanctification*, p. 23.

³ Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 42, extends the application

The idea that sin inheres in the material substance of man finds expression in the theology of the synagogue.¹ It is there taught that the sinful tendency in man is the tendency toward the fulfilment of the corporeal functions; and that the sense-principle, as such, when unrestrained by the will, works evil.

Man is not wholly "flesh" in the ethical sense of this word; he is not wholly bad. Paul finds in him various and important elements of good. The analysis which the apostle gives of his own state while he was under the law, before Christ delivered him, is essentially applicable to every man whom Christ has not delivered, whether he is under the written or the unwritten law. Looking back into his heart as it was in the old Pharisaic days, he sees in it that which "hated" what he did. There was also something in him that recognized the excellency of the law, something that even delighted in the law. Slave though he was, there was in him an "I" that desired to do good. This higher self within him, this something that was not "flesh," he calls the inward man (*ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*), the law of the mind (*νόμος τοῦ νοῦς*), or simply the mind (*νοῦς*). But this higher self was in bondage to the flesh, and could be delivered only by a power above itself (Rom. vii. 25). In the Epistle to the Romans Paul attributes to the Gentiles essentially the same elements that have just been noted. They also recognize a divine law, and know that their transgression of it exposes them to judgment (Rom. i. 32; ii. 15). They

of Rom. vii. 9-11 even to Adam. A. B. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 142, inclines to hold that a "bias" toward sin is original in human nature, but this is practically to make God the author of sin.

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 204.

may at times be justified by their consciences before the law, which implies that they have delighted themselves in it. Here, then, in Gentiles as in Jews, are noble elements which, though restrained by sin from their proper manifestation, never entirely cease to protest against it.

Man's affinity with God and capacity for receiving His Spirit is implied in the fact that one of the constituent¹ elements of man is *spirit* (*πνεῦμα*) (1 Thess. v. 23; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Rom. i. 9). Kinship with the Divine Spirit is implied in Paul's representation that the Spirit of God *witnesses* with the human spirit (Rom. viii. 16; 2 Cor. xiii. 14). It is also involved in the conception that the human spirit is the dwelling-place, the organ, of the Holy Spirit (Gal. vi. 18; 2 Tim. iv. 22; Philemon 25). This affinity with God and capacity for receiving the Spirit of God are facts of man's being which stand, in Paul's teaching, over against the fact that man is "flesh," alienated from the life of God and sold under sin.

Paul teaches that the need of Christ is universal, because sin is universal. He declares that all men are under sin (Rom. iii. 9; Gal. iii. 22). All are ^{(4) Univer-} _{sality of sin.} by nature children of wrath and sons of disobedience (Eph. ii. 3; Col. iii. 6). The universality of sin is implied in the doctrine that Christ died for *all*, and that God was in Christ reconciling the *world* unto Himself (2 Cor. v. 14, 19; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 11).

In the theology of the synagogue also universal sinfulness was taught. It was held that even Moses committed six sins.²

¹ Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 35-37. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 16, thinks that Paul regarded spirit as foreign to the being of man as such.

² Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 224.

Paul makes a certain distinction between the Gentiles and the Jews, claiming for the latter a consecration due to the fact that they are the elect people, who have a divine law and a knowledge of God, who are beloved for the fathers' sake, and are branches from a holy root (Rom. xi. 16, 28), yet this distinction by no means does away with the sinfulness of the Jews. Yet while Paul's general teaching is plain, and the doctrine of universal sinfulness is found in the later as well as in the earlier Epistles, it is important to notice that he makes a distinction between conscious sin, which brings spiritual death, and what we may call a dormant sinful principle. Wilful sin is not absolutely universal. For Paul says of himself that he was alive once, and that he died when he consciously violated divine law (Rom. vii. 9). This must be understood as meaning that there was a period of childhood in which Paul was not consciously a transgressor of law, a period of innocence. There came an hour in which he realized for the first time that he was confronted by a divine commandment which ran counter to his own desire, and when he voluntarily transgressed that commandment. This was the fatal hour. Before this he had been alive, now he died. It appears to me a mistake to regard this period of innocence as a state of "unconscious bondage and delusive satisfaction." Paul says that the principle of sin was dead or sleeping during this period. Not until it was aroused could it bring into bondage or delude. Paul is not contrasting a state of unconscious bondage with a state of conscious bondage, but a time of innocency with a time of spiritual death.

This idea of a period of innocence belonged to the Jewish theology. The rabbis said that a child of eight

or nine years is not yet sinful, but from the tenth year forward he develops the evil tendency.¹

Paul admits that the principle of sin was in him, with all its terrible potency, but it was dead or slumbering (Rom. vii. 8-9). He died spiritually when this principle revived and expressed itself in a positive transgression of law.

The same truth is given a universal application in the famous comparison of the dispensation of death through Adam with the dispensation of life through Christ (Rom. v. 12-21). The many, that is, *all* men, were constituted sinful through the disobedience of one. This can be understood only as meaning that all came into possession of that principle of which Paul speaks in chapter vii. 9. Here again Paul's teaching is that of the synagogue. The rabbis held that sin was the result of the decision of the individual, that it was actually general, but not of itself absolutely necessary.

Paul seems to account for this dormant principle of sin in the human heart by the organic connection of the race with Adam.² In accounting for the universal reign of physical death he traces it back to the sin of Adam, in which sin the race participated organically³ (Rom. v. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 22). This generic or race-sin is the cause of physical death, not of spiritual death. The former is inherited; the latter voluntary. This race-sin furnishes a natural explanation of the presence in the heart of that sinful principle which, like a spark

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 206.

² According to Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 242, Paul thought of Adam's influence in bringing about universal sinfulness as mediated by sexual generation.

³ Comp. Stevens, *The Pauline Theology*, p. 129; Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 59-61.

when air strikes it, revives in the presence of law, and by which man is slain spiritually.

So far the nature and extent of sin. We turn now to the law in its relation to man's need of the Messiah. It was not God's design, according to Paul, ⁽⁵⁾ Sin and that the law itself should deliver from sin and ^{the Law.} its consequences. The rabbis indeed taught that the law gives eternal life. He who has the phylacteries on his head, the mesusa on his door, and the zizith on his garment, may be sure that he does not sin.¹ But Paul's teaching is fundamentally opposed to this. He holds that the Jewish law was a tutor, not a deliverer (Gal. iii. 24). If there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law (Gal. iii. 21). The law would have been against the promises of God if it could have given life. And that law which was written on the hearts of the Gentiles was certainly not written there to the end that they might secure salvation by works. For in the Jewish Scriptures it is declared that God designed to justify the Gentiles by *faith*, not by any works which they might do (Gal. iii. 8). Hence even the law teaches that man must be justified by faith. Thus was Abraham justified, and thus David also (Rom. iv. 6-8). The Old Testament law of life was faith, even as is that of the New Testament (Rom. i. 17). Thus in Paul's thought his doctrine is the doctrine of Scripture from the beginning. It is not new; it does not date even from Christ. It is the divine method of saving sinners in all ages and in all lands. When, therefore, Paul teaches that the law was unto life, being holy and righteous and good, it is not to be understood that life was to be *directly* produced by the

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 26-28.

law itself. The law was unto life, but *Christ* was the life in view. It was to lead to Him that He might give life. He is the end of the law both as its aim and its termination (Rom. x. 4).

It can doubtless be said that *if* a man were to do the works of the law, he would live by them, and would then have ground of glorying (Rom. iv. 2). But Paul teaches that no one has done the works of the law. The Jews, without exception, are under condemnation (Rom. iii. 9). Paul says of himself, it is true, that as touching the righteousness which is in the law (Phil. iii. 6), he was found blameless, but that was only by men. Looking back upon that same period of life from his Christian standpoint, he calls himself the chief of sinners (1 Tim. i. 15), and describes that period as being in reality a time of spiritual death (Rom. vii. 7-25).

The sense in which Paul uses law (*νόμος*) when he speaks of the inadequacy of the law to deliver from sin, is that of an ordinance which requires works.¹ He uses it as he had understood it in his earlier Pharisaic career.² The law was essentially a body of commandments, positive and negative, touching the outward life. Paul does not teach that the Old Testament revelation in its entirety failed to make known a way of salvation, and failed to deliver men from sin. On the contrary, he holds that it contained the very Gospel in germ (Rom. i. 2), for it taught righteousness through *faith* (Rom. i. 17; iv.). Men were justified before the Mosaic legislation (*e.g.* Abraham, Rom. iv. 6), and were also justified under that dispensation (*e.g.* David, Rom. iv. 6). He finds promise after promise in the Old Testament that who-

¹ Comp. chap. iv., pp. 75-76.

² Comp. A. Zahn, *Das Gesetz Gottes*, etc., p. 25.

soever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved (Rom. x. 13). The law that was inadequate to deliver from sin, the law which kept man in bondage and cursed him (Gal. iii. 10; iv. 3), was the law of works, the law as it was apprehended by the Jews in Paul's time.

This law was not given to deliver men from sin, but to make them conscious of their *need* of deliverance. The law gives knowledge of sin, but not ^{(6) Purpose} power over it (Rom. iii. 20; vii. 7). ^{of the law.} The commandment was given in order that the exceeding sinfulness of sin might be felt (Rom. vii. 13). Hence Paul says that the strength of sin was the law (1 Cor. xv. 56). The law works wrath since its very presence provokes transgression (Rom. iv. 15; vii. 7-11). It was added to the existing covenants, the covenants that had been made in the interval between Adam and Moses, in order that it might expose the nature of sin (Rom. v. 20; Gal. iii. 19). It does not *increase* sin, but calls it forth into manifestation. The law, therefore, was not directly redemptive, for while it made known the holiness of God, it thereby made man more conscious of his own sin and helplessness.

This law of works was temporary; it was not from the beginning. The covenant with Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the law, was a covenant of faith, not of works (Gal. iii. 17). Nor was this law to continue forever. It was added only until the seed should come through whom redemption might be accomplished (Gal. iii. 19).

The theology of the synagogue¹ taught that the law

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 15; Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, i. 235.

was before time and would continue to eternity. Jehovah took counsel with the law when He created the world. He includes the law with Himself when He says in Genesis, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." But Paul did not share this view of the law. For him, the law, as an ordinance of works, was a device which God made use of between Moses and Christ, and which then became obsolete.

We have seen that, in the thought of Paul, Gentile and Jew alike need the deliverance which the Messiah (7) State of brings, since both are sinful. From inci- the Gentiles. dental references, we may follow Paul's thought of the Gentiles somewhat farther. Their condition is not without rays of light and hope. He admits the possibility of the salvation of Gentiles who know neither of Christ nor of the Old Testament revelation. When Gentiles (that is, individual cases), which have no law, do by nature the things of the law, these, having not law, are a law unto themselves (Rom. ii. 14). If the uncircumcision (that is, Gentiles) keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision (Rom. ii. 26)? The argument of these passages implies that, in Paul's thought, there were some Gentiles who did keep the law written on their hearts. He may have had in mind a Melchizedek, a Rahab, a Job, or a Jethro, all of whom were Gentiles. Or he may have thought of a Cornelius, or of Gentiles whom he had known. With his Old Testament open before him, he could certainly say what he does in Rom. ii. 14-16, 26-27; and he could not well say less. But such Gentiles, as these passages imply, are, in Paul's thought, exceptions. His general

teaching in regard to the condition of the Gentile world is terribly dark. For him the inadequacy of the revelation of God in Nature to secure holiness of life is patent. There is indeed such a revelation. The eternal power and divinity of God (Rom. i. 19-20), His goodness (Acts xiv. 17), His law in the heart (Rom. ii. 15), are all witnesses of Him, and sufficient to form a basis of responsibility (Rom. i. 20), therefore sufficient to insure deliverance to one who seeks it with all his heart. But men have not sought it thus. Paul tells the Lystrans that in the generations gone by God had suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways (Acts xiv. 15-16), and so they had been turned away from the living God. Again, he says that the Gentiles held down the truth which God had made known through Nature and conscience (Rom. i. 18). They refused to have God in their knowledge, and, although knowing that the ordinance of God was against their sins, they nevertheless committed them (Rom. i. 28, 32). Thus God's revelation of Himself in Nature does not secure righteousness of life.

Another aspect of human need, incidental to man's sin, is exposure to God's wrath. Paul does not suggest that the word *wrath* itself (*ὀργή*) has any ⁽⁸⁾ Wrath peculiar significance when applied to God. ^{of God.} His conception of God, of course, requires us to think of His wrath as always based on righteousness and always mingled with love.

Paul sees a revelation of the wrath of God in the history of both Jews and Gentiles, as that history contains also a revelation of God's mercy (Rom. i. 18; iv. 15). Among Gentiles and Jews alike there is

transgression of divine law, and this brings wrath on the transgressor. God's wrath is partially revealed in the present age, and consists, on the one hand, in giving sinners over to their sin, to deeper and ever deeper degradation and misery (Rom. i. 18-32; 2 Thess. ii. 10-11). Men who do not receive the love of the truth, are given over to believe lies. Men who refuse to have God in their knowledge are delivered over by Him to the evolution of sin upon sin (Rom. i. 24, 26, 28; ix. 18; comp. Mark iv. 12). This giving over to sin we may regard as only another way of saying that God has established certain laws, whose transgression or observance has inevitable moral results. If men give themselves over to sin, their sinking ever deeper can be called a judgment of God, or a manifestation of His wrath, because it is according to a law which God has made.

On the other hand, Paul also sees a manifestation of God's wrath in the present age in certain *specific* physical judgments. Thus, the fate which overtook the Israelites in the wilderness was an expression of God's wrath (1 Cor. x. 5-10). So in like manner is the punishment of evil by the state, and so are the calamities that fell upon the Jewish nation in its last struggle and in the destruction of Jerusalem (Rom. xiii. 4; 1 Thess. ii. 16). But it cannot be inferred that Paul thought of physical judgment as *always* overtaking sin. He says that the wrath of God is mingled with longsuffering (Rom. ix. 22), and even that God, through long ages of history, passed over sin (Acts xvii. 30; Rom. iii. 25), that is, did not visit upon sinners the full consequences of their sin. He probably thought of the manifestation of divine

wrath in temporal judgments of a physical sort as the exception rather than the rule. The day of wrath in a preëminent sense belongs to the future (1 Thess. i. 10; Rom. ii. 5; v. 9); but whether future or present, the fact of exposure to wrath in consequence of sin emphasizes man's need of the Messiah.

CHAPTER III

THE EARTHLY WORK OF THE MESSIAH

PAUL learned of the Messiah's earthly work as did other men of his generation. He tells the Thessalonians to stand fast and hold the *traditions* (1) Source of Paul's knowledge of this work. (*παραδόσεις*) which they were taught whether by his word or letter (2 Thess. ii. 15), and speaks of some who did not walk after the *traditions* which they had received from him (2 Thess. iii. 6). He praises the Corinthians because they hold fast the *traditions* even as he had delivered these unto them (1 Cor. xi. 2). Accordingly he claims that what he had taught the Thessalonians and Corinthians had been handed down among the disciples. It had come to him as it came to others. Again, when speaking of the Gospel which he had preached to the Corinthians, he says, "I delivered unto you that which also I *received*" (1 Cor. xv. 3), namely, from other believers. The source of his teaching is plain also in the passage regarding marriage (1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25). On the general character of the bond, he says, "I give charge, not I, but the Lord." He speaks thus because he had in the current teaching of Jesus a specific statement (*e.g.* Mark x. 1-12). A little later, when touching points on which Jesus, as far as we know, did *not* speak, Paul teaches on his own authority, and does not appeal to

Jesus. Thus the difference in his language is explained, naturally and historically, by reference to the sources.

Again, he says that he received *of the Lord* (ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου) his account of the Last Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23); but the preposition used here implies nothing more than that he believed Jesus was the ultimate source of the words of institution. He does not claim that his account rests on a special revelation. Such a revelation was, of course, quite unnecessary, since the words that Jesus spoke over the bread and wine were well known in the Church, as were His other words.

There is one passage that appears to be at variance with those already considered, namely, that in which Paul says that he did not receive his Gospel from man, but through revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. i. 12). Now we have three detailed accounts of the revelation to which he refers, and from these his meaning is clear. It is this, that the fundamental fact of the Messiahship of Jesus and the consequent doctrine of salvation through Him, without works of the law, rested not on the teaching of men, but on his vision of the risen Christ. Thus it was this fundamental, historical fact of the resurrection, and not the teaching of Jesus contained in the words of the Gospel, in regard to which Paul claimed that his knowledge rested on a special revelation. He learned of the Messiah's earthly work, apart from the fact of His resurrection, just as other believers learned of it. He may have had his own peculiar interpretation of this or that fact in the work of the Messiah, and may have emphasized this or that truth less or more than it was emphasized by other teachers; but, with the exception already noted, his teaching rested on the current traditions regarding the life of Jesus.

What now was Paul's interpretation of the earthly work of the Messiah? We answer, first, that, in his thought, Jesus revealed God as our Father, by His life, and, more especially, by His death.

(2) The fatherhood of God in the teaching of Paul.

The fatherhood of God, as revealed by Jesus in word and in life, pervades all the Epistles of Paul. It is there not chiefly as a doctrine to be taught, but rather as the gracious background of all doctrine. It appears as an axiom of Christian thought, an element as unquestioned as is the reality of the religious life.

It appears in the frequent use of the name *Father*. Thus each of the thirteen Letters attributed to Paul brings the fatherhood of God into its opening sentences. This single fact is proof that the revelation of the fatherhood of God through Jesus had made a most profound impression on the apostle's mind.

Again, we meet the fundamental revelation of Jesus when Paul says that the distinctive expression of the Christian spirit, as toward God, is in the words, "Abba, Father." This is the new confession that is taught us by the spirit of God's Son (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15). It not only takes us to the heart of Jesus' revelation of God, but it does so in the most tender, personal manner, by using the very Aramaic word which Jesus Himself used in His communion with the Father in Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 36). Thus it appears that the attitude of Jesus toward God was, in Paul's thought, the ideal attitude for the disciples of Jesus.

Further, the fatherhood of God, as revealed in Jesus, is reflected from the writings of Paul in the prominence which they give to God's *love*. To Paul, as to the apostle who reclined on Jesus' bosom, God is a God of love.

It is His love out of which the work of redemption springs (Rom. v. 8; Eph. ii. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 16). Love is the one great lesson that God seeks to teach us (1 Thess. iv. 9). The consciousness of His love is that which gives the believer the deepest joy and a courage that overcomes all foes (Rom. viii. 38-39). His love with the grace of Jesus and the fellowship of the Spirit is the highest gift of which the apostle can conceive (2 Cor. xiii. 14). The love of God for us is fundamental in Paul's ethics as in the ethics of Jesus. Love is the fulfilment of God's law (Rom. xiii. 8), and he who loves is blameless before God (Eph. i. 4). This is a pure echo of the thought of Jesus, who teaches that by love we become perfect as the Father is perfect (Matt. v. 48).

The fatherhood of God which is thus prominent in the writings of Paul does not differ from His fatherhood as taught by Jesus. The term describes the *character* of God, and not His relation to a particular people. This is sufficiently manifest from the fact that Paul saw the love of God perfectly expressed in Jesus (Rom. viii. 39), taken with the other fact that Jesus laid down His life for *all* (Rom. v. 15; 2 Cor. v. 14). Thus the personal love of God for all, or His fatherhood over all, is seen to be the thought of the apostle. And in line with this is his use of the name "Father." For he does not limit it to those who believe in Jesus, but uses it at times, as the Fourth Gospel does, in an absolute sense. Thus, in Eph. iv. 6, he says there is one God and Father of all. Accordingly, His fatherhood is as wide in its relationships as is His Godhood (comp. Eph. iii. 14; Phil. ii. 11; 2 Cor. i. 3).¹

¹ According to the Athenian address (Acts xvii. 28-29) Paul may sometimes have called God our Father simply because He *created* us, a ground of fatherhood not found in the words of Jesus.

Such, in brief outline, is the impress made on Paul's writings by the revelation of the fatherhood of God which Jesus gave.

The citations already made show that Paul saw this revelation of fatherhood both in the life and in the death of Jesus. His use of the term "Father," which is a symbol of the divine love, rests, of course, on the teaching and practice of Jesus, and not directly on the fact of His death. But, at the same time, it is evident that the death of Jesus was for Paul the *signal* manifestation of God's love, and so the signal manifestation of His fatherhood. It was this event by which God commended His love toward us (Rom. v. 8). It was this which proved to Paul that God will give us all things (Rom. viii. 32). It was this which also proved the love of Christ (Eph. v. 2, 25; 2 Cor. v. 14), but *His* love was the expression of the love of God (Rom. viii. 39).

This view of the death of Christ, which sees in it the highest proof of divine love, is that which the Fourth Gospel emphasizes.¹ The significance of the death of Jesus from this point of view manifestly did not differ in kind from the significance of His life. It differed in degree only, being the final manifestation of a love which was also manifested in the entire ministry of Jesus. If Paul saw a revelation of God's fatherhood in the life of Jesus, then he doubtless believed that His life had redemptive power.²

(3) The righteousness of God in the death of Jesus.

A second element in the earthly work of the Messiah, according to Paul, is that His death in behalf of sinners demonstrated the righteousness of God. The classic passage

¹ Comp. Gilbert, *The Revelation of Jesus*, pp. 276-282.

² Comp. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 66.

on this aspect of the death of Jesus, and the only one of any length, is Rom. iii. 25-26. Other data which, with varying degrees of certainty may be brought under this phase of the subject, are first the passages which say that Christ was made "sin" and a "curse" for us, and that the law was nailed to the cross (2 Cor. v. 21 ; Gal. iii. 13 ; Col. ii. 14) ; second, the expressions "justification through His blood," "redemption through His blood," and "reconciled through His death" (Rom. v. 9-10 ; Eph. i. 7) ; third, the four passages which use the words "price" or "ransom" (1 Cor. vi. 20 ; vii. 23 ; 1 Tim. ii. 6 ; Tit. ii. 14) ; and, fourth, the passages which refer to the death of Jesus as being "for us" or "for sins" (*e.g.* 2 Cor. v. 14 ; Gal. i. 4 ; Rom. viii. 32 ; Eph. v. 25).

When Paul says that Christ gave Himself for us or died for us (*ὑπέρ*), he simply affirms that His death was in our behalf, for our good. He does not suggest *how* it benefited us. We learn from Paul elsewhere that the death of Christ was for our good *in various ways*, and therefore these passages, which in themselves are quite indeterminate, may either be regarded as general statements, or be interpreted in line with other passages which suggest specific ways in which the death of Christ benefited men. In the group of passages which use the words "price" or "ransom," it is probably the *death* of Jesus which is regarded as the ransom, at least in an eminent sense. This is the price of our deliverance from the bondage of sin¹ (Rom. viii. 23 ; Eph. iv. 30) ; but the passages do not indicate how, in the thought of Paul, the death of Jesus ransoms us from sin, whether by the influence of the love of Jesus upon our hearts,

¹ Comp. Abbott, *International Critical Commentary on Ephesians and Colossians*, pp. 11-13.

that love which made the utmost sacrifice in our behalf, or by virtue of the fact that through the death of Jesus there is a demonstration of the righteousness of God. Christian experience gives at least a partial answer to the question, How does the death of Jesus ransom us from sin? But with this we are not at present concerned. We are seeking after the thought which Paul had when he used this language.

In the second and first groups of data, the general thought seems to be in line with that of Rom. iii. 25-26. We must now consider more particularly the content of this passage. The cross demonstrated God's righteousness and enabled Him to declare righteous one who believed in Jesus. The context in which this statement is found defines "righteousness" by associating it with the passing over of sin. When sin is passed over, ignored, God's righteousness is *not* manifested. Therefore, by the righteousness of God, Paul here means His disposition to treat moral beings according to His perfect moral law. This righteousness had not been manifested in former ages, but sin had been *passed over* in the forbearance of God (Acts xvii. 30; Rom. iii. 25). It had not been forgiven, neither had it received its due punishment. Although God as a God of holiness was *disposed* to manifest His wrath, He yet had borne with much longsuffering those who were exposed to His wrath (Rom. ix. 22).

But on the cross this righteousness of God was demonstrated. The apostle does not here say *how* it was demonstrated. He goes no farther than an affirmation of the fact. But at this point we get light on Paul's thought from the related passages. He says in Corinthians that God made the sinless One to be sin on our

behalf (2 Cor. v. 21). This seems to mean that God regarded the death of Christ as an offering for sin.¹ The sin of men is ideally transferred to Him, and removed by His death. A second passage that throws light on Paul's thought is Gal. iii. 13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." The curse of the law is death as the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23; iv. 15; vii. 9-11). Christ became a curse for us in dying on the cross, that is, He bore the curse which the law pronounces upon one who has done a sin worthy of death (Dt. xxi. 23).² But He had done no sin Himself, and was not obnoxious to the curse of the law. Therefore, when Paul says that Christ became a curse, he assumes that the sins of men were in some sense transferred to Him, and that by dying He met the demand of the law. Hence he says in Colossians that the law was nailed to the cross (Col. ii. 14).

We conclude then that Paul saw a demonstration of God's righteousness in the death of Jesus, because he believed that the sins of believers were ideally transferred to Him, and that by His death a settlement was made between sin and the law. The blood of Jesus has propitiatory value (*ἱλαστήριον*) because it satisfies the demands of God's holy law (Rom. iii. 25). Therefore it effects a reconciliation on the divine side. It may indeed be doubted whether a single passage in which Paul speaks of reconciliation refers explicitly to a change in God's attitude. The term is usually, if not always, used of the change in man (Rom. xi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 20;

¹ Comp. Schmiedel in the *Hand-Kommentar*.

² Comp. Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 253; Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 184.

Col. i. 20-22). Yet it cannot be denied that the idea of a reconciliation on God's part is germane to that aspect of the death of Christ which we are now considering. It is also a necessary correlate of the teaching that sinners are exposed to the *wrath* of God (*e.g.* Rom. i. 18, 32; ii. 3). Moreover, it is implied in the word *propitiation* in Rom. iii. 25.

We have thus far considered the cross as demonstrating God's righteousness. The second point which Paul makes in Rom. iii. 25-26, that the cross enables God to regard as righteous him who has faith in Jesus, follows naturally from the first. For by faith in Jesus a man becomes identified with Him, and so shares in the fruit of His settlement between sin and the law. The ground on which the believer is declared righteous is accordingly twofold: it is the death of Jesus in his behalf, and it is his personal appropriation of the death of Jesus. It is the historical act of Jesus, and it is an ethical acceptance of Jesus as the one who accomplished that act. This historical act was probably thought of by Paul as in line with the ancient provision for pardon through the shedding of blood (*e.g.* Is. liii.; Lev. iv. 24).

In conclusion on this aspect of the earthly work of the Messiah, the following points may be noticed. First, it is the *love* of God which provided, on the cross, a demonstration of His righteousness. If the cross points to the law of God, it also points and oftener to His love; and it points to His law with the purpose of leading men to accept His love. In so far we cannot speak of the cross as changing God's attitude toward sinners, but rather as *manifesting* that attitude. And here, in the depths of the subject, the conception of Paul is not different from that of Jesus Himself (*e.g.*

John iii. 16), who made the *love* of God the source of redemption.

Second, the death of Jesus is not thought of by Paul as a *punishment* of sin. For the sins of men are *ideally* transferred to Jesus, not actually. Men who do not accept Jesus have to answer for their sins. They are still under the wrath of God, as though Jesus had not died, which means that their sins have not been removed. The death of Jesus is a means of propitiation *through faith* (Rom. iii. 25), that is to say, it is not such in and of itself, irrespective of man's attitude.¹ It is only when men turn to Jesus in faith that they have a right to think of His death as meeting the demands which a holy law makes upon them. And when they thus accept Jesus, Paul says their sins are freely forgiven (Eph. ii. 7; iv. 32). The justification of him who has faith in Jesus is a *gracious* justification (Rom. iii. 24; Gal. i. 6, etc.). But if the sins which are transferred to Christ are *forgiven* to the sinner, they cannot also be *punished*. As moreover the cross does not stand for the *punishment* of sin, it does not give ground for the idea that Jesus in dying consciously experienced the anger of God. /

Third, this view of the cross as a demonstration of the righteousness of God is difficult to be understood, as is sufficiently manifest in the large number of theories of the atonement which are based upon this passage. It is especially liable to lead to unethical conceptions of the pardon of sin, and to conceptions of God which it is hard to reconcile with the teaching of Jesus. Therefore it should be held and explained in close connection with Paul's teaching on the fatherhood of God and on the ethical quality of faith.

¹ Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 152-153.

This is a view of the cross which probably lay more nearly level to the thought of the Jew in Paul's time than it does to our thought after centuries of Christian history. And yet it still appeals to the hearts and minds of believers, to some with greater force than to others, and it doubtless has elements of permanent value wrapped up in its Jewish form. Perhaps the chief of these elements are: (1) that it impresses the heart with the *awfulness of sin*. This is done also in the Gospel narrative, as we read how sinners crucified the Lord of glory, thus spurning the very love of God. But it is presented from a different point of view when Christ is said to have been made a curse for us, and when its bondage is represented as so fearful that only the death of Jesus could ransom from it. (2) That it impresses the mind with the *holiness of God's love*. It makes the cross witness to the righteousness of God, as it also witnesses to the sinfulness of man. And in so far as this view of the cross does impress the mind with the thought that the love of God is *holy* love, which cannot possibly bestow an unconditional pardon upon sinners, it surely has a permanent value.

And here, to guard Paul's thought from misunderstanding, we must remember that the death of Christ was *voluntary* — He gave Himself (*e.g.* Gal. i. 4; Eph. v. 2); also that the suffering of Christ is thought of as causing suffering to God — He *spared* not (*ἐφείσατο*) His own Son (Rom. viii. 32); and finally the law which is satisfied is an expression of the will of God. Thus we come back to the conception that God suffered, and that it was necessary for Him to suffer in order to save men from sin. This suffering was rendered necessary, according to the Fourth Gospel, by the need of revela-

tion on the part of sinful men ; but according to Paul, in those passages now under consideration, it was rendered necessary by the demands of a holy law. But law demands it only in view of sin. Therefore, in either case, it is man's *sin* that is the ultimate cause of the suffering of Christ and God. Here Paul is plainly in accord with the Gospel ; and this element which is common to both is doubtless fundamental.

A third element in the Messianic work of Jesus, according to Paul, is that He set up a perfect standard of character and life. We have already noticed the fundamental assertions of Paul in regard to the character of Jesus, that in it he saw the holiness and the love of God. We are now to go a step farther and consider the character of Jesus in relation to men. Paul teaches that what He was, He was for us, and that we may and must aspire to be like Him. The fact that Jesus set forth the divine ideal of human character and life constituted one fundamental element in His earthly service.

We may learn the thought of Paul by considering, first, certain *general* statements regarding Christ as our standard ; and, second, certain *specific* elements in the life and character of Jesus which are to be reproduced in us. Under the first head we may notice that God's will concerning us, especially that we should always rejoice, that we should pray without ceasing, and be thankful in every state, is seen in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. v. 16-18). He is the image of God, expressive of the divine fulness, but we ourselves are to be conformed to this image (2 Cor. iv. 4 ; Col. i. 15, 19 ; Rom. viii. 29 ; 2 Cor. iii. 18). This is the eternal purpose of God concerning us, the sole thing which Paul ever mentions as fore-

ordained (*πρροορίζειν*) (Rom. viii. 29; Eph. i. 5, 11). To be conformed to the image of God's Son is to be "made full" in Him (Col. ii. 10), to attain to the fulness of Christ (Eph. iv. 13), or to be filled unto all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19). Once Paul speaks of the new man as being renewed according to the image of Him who *created* him, that is, God, but in the next sentence he says of this new man, that Christ is all and in all (Col. iii. 10). Thus the image to which we are conformed is not ethically different from the character of God Himself.

Of the same tenor are the following statements of the apostle. All the promises of God concerning us have their "yea," their fulfilment, in Christ; and to this "yea" there should come from us an answering "amen," to the glory of God (2 Cor. i. 20). And this is realized in so far as we grow up in all things into Him (Eph. iv. 15), or as we put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xiii. 14; Gal. iii. 27). Looking at the outward life, the ideal for Paul is that we should walk in Christ (Col. ii. 6); that our manner of life should be worthy of His Gospel (Phil. i. 27); that we should do all things in His name, that is, in the spirit which His name represents (Col. iii. 17); and thus that Jesus and we also should be glorified (2 Thess. i. 12).

Then, second, we learn the thought of Paul by considering certain specific elements in the life and character of Jesus which are to be reproduced in us. Thus, for example, the law of Christ for His followers is that they should bear each other's burdens (Gal. vi. 2), that is, they should love each other, as He loved (Eph. v. 2). This is Paul's statement of the "new commandment" which we find in John xiii. 34. It is only another

statement of this truth when Paul exhorts his readers to imitate Christ who pleased not Himself (Rom. xv. 2-3). He appealed to the Corinthians by the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ (2 Cor. x. 1). He prayed that the Thessalonians might have the *patience* of Jesus (2 Thess. iii. 5), as they also imitated Him in that they had the joy of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. i. 6). He himself followed the example of Jesus in that he sought by all means to *save men*, and in this respect he wished his readers to imitate him (1 Cor. x. 33; xi. 1). It is manifest from this survey of Paul's words regarding the imitation of Christ, that he saw one of the fundamental services of Jesus in this, that Jesus gave men a divine ideal of life. In this great feature he surely echoes the teaching of Jesus Himself.

A fourth element in the earthly service of the Messiah is that, through His life and especially through His death, He furnished His disciples a *motive power* strong enough to carry them to the goal which He had set up. This is implied in the three elements of His work which have already been mentioned, but nevertheless ought to be specially stated. For one of the great distinctive marks of Christianity is this, that it supplies a motive power which is found nowhere else. This power was not given by Jesus apart from His revelation; it was *in* that revelation, and the elements of this have been separately considered. And yet this *aspect* of the revelation, this characteristic which had such marked results in the life of Paul, and which is impressed upon his writings, has not been directly mentioned. To omit this, however, would be to omit a vital feature, though, as already indicated, it is not correlative with the ele-

(5) Jesus
furnished
motive
power.

ments of the Messiah's work which have been presented, but is rather a subtle power with which they are all charged.

And it is plain that, for Paul, this power lay in the *personal form* of the Christian revelation. He was moved, not by the revelation of fatherhood, as an abstract teaching, but by the love of God in the living Jesus; not by a doctrine of the atonement which satisfied the intellect, but by a dear Friend who gave Himself for us; not by an ideal of character and life which could be exhaustively presented to the mind, but by an ideal embodied in human form, divine and exhaustless.

The difference in motive power between Christianity and the religion of the Old Testament is not in the superiority of the revelation of the former regarded as a system of truth, but it is in the fact that Christianity is embodied in Christ. It lies in the fact that in Christianity we have a personal approach of God to us. This is the tenor of Paul's words. The power to realize the Christian ideal is in Jesus. We are more than conquerors through *Him* that loved us (Rom. viii. 37). The motive is love, but love embodied in a person. The thought is turned to the living Lord when Paul says, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Phil. iv. 13), but we reach the living Lord by way of the historical Jesus. We should never have the conviction that we could do all things in Him, if we were not first assured that He did all things for us. Again, one who would suffer hardship as a good soldier must remember Jesus Christ (2 Tim. ii. 8). But this is more than to remember a certain Christian teaching, as the Sermon on the Mount; it is more than to remember this or that thing which Jesus did. It is to bring the soul face to

face with the living Lord. In like manner Paul appeals to his converts to live holy lives by the fact that they are members of Christ, that is, by the fact of a *personal relationship* (1 Cor. vi. 15; xii. 13, 27). It is a personal relationship also which is the constraining force to bring all activities into the sphere of service for God and man (2 Cor. v. 14). It is through appreciation of the love of Christ, love that was manifest in the laying down of His life, that we are filled unto all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19). In other words, the personal love of Christ is the great motive that works in us for the attainment of the highest gifts which God has for us.

This teaching of Paul in regard to the motive power which came into the world with Jesus Christ was confirmed by his own splendid life, and has been confirmed in myriads of other lives.

CHAPTER IV

ENTRANCE INTO THE NEW LIFE

THE Epistles of Paul are addressed to those who have already entered into the new life in Christ, and therefore it is not surprising that they contain as little as they do regarding this entrance itself. If we had a number of Paul's sermons to the unconverted, we might find in them somewhat more about conversion; and yet, judging from the character of his Epistles, it is doubtful whether Paul in his preaching ever had much to say on such topics as human freedom, the nature of faith, repentance, and regeneration. He brought to men the good tidings of a Saviour, and it seems that he did this in the most practical manner, keeping close to the facts of history and experience. Yet data are not wholly lacking from which Paul's thought on the entrance into the new life may be derived.

And first, that entrance involves intelligent activity on man's part, which is variously described in popular, not technical, language. At the beginning of the new life, and constituting that beginning, there is the *acceptance* of something from God. Now it is the acceptance of the word of the message as being indeed God's word, a living word that works in the heart of the believer (1 Thess. i. 6; ii. 13). Again, it is receiving the Spirit (Gal. iii. 2; Rom. viii. 15; 2 Cor.

(1) Terms used of man's activity.

xi. 4); it is also receiving the gift of righteousness (Rom. v. 17), and, most comprehensively, it is receiving Christ Jesus (Col. ii. 6). Paul also describes it in general terms as a turning unto God from idols, in connection with which repentance is mentioned (Acts xiv. 15; 1 Thess. i. 9). Again, the entrance into the new life is described as the *putting away* of various things, to wit, sin, enmity, and the old man (Rom. vi. 2; 2 Cor. v. 20; Eph. iv. 22). But these activities of receiving and putting off are closely connected. They are practically the same effort of the soul viewed with reference to two different objects — sin and Christ.

In these terms which have now been passed in review, we have a plain indication of the popular and universally intelligible way in which Paul was accustomed to speak of man's part in the entrance into the new life in Christ.

The place which *repentance* occupied in Paul's preaching is learned almost entirely from the narrative of his work in Acts, where we have three significant ⁽²⁾ of statements. In his sermon to the Athenians ^{repentance}. Paul says that God commands men everywhere to repent, that is, of course, wherever the Gospel is proclaimed (Acts xvii. 22-34). Repentance is thus a duty laid by God on all who hear the Gospel. In two discourses in which Paul refers to the character of his work among unbelievers, we have comprehensive utterances regarding his preaching of repentance. It is to be noticed that both these discourses came late in Paul's life, after the completion of his missionary journeys. What he says may therefore be taken as characteristic of his entire preaching to unbelievers. To the elders of the church at Ephesus, where Paul had labored three years, he says

in his farewell discourse that he had testified both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xx. 21). And in his speech before Agrippa, Paul describes his preaching as a preaching of repentance, of turning to God and doing works worthy of repentance (Acts xxvi. 20). Thus it appears that in the preaching of Paul, as in that of John the Baptist and of Jesus, repentance had a prominent place.

Repentance is toward God, whose law has been broken, and it is to be accompanied by works worthy of repentance (Acts xx. 21; xxvi. 20). Its essence is godly sorrow, or sorrow for sin as that which is hateful to God (2 Cor. vii. 9-10). No doubt repentance was thought of by Paul as properly an activity of man. Once only he speaks of it as a gift of God, but this must be understood in the sense that God throws around the sinner circumstances which invite repentance (2 Tim. ii. 24-25). Thus he says to the Jew whom he apostrophizes in the Letter to the Romans (ii. 4), "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

We have seen that the entrance into the new life involves, on man's part, the acceptance of something from God, preëminently the acceptance of Christ. This is Paul's conception of *faith*. To believe in the Messiah is to receive the Messiah. Paul uses the two terms interchangeably (Rom. v. 17; 2 Cor. vi. 1; Acts xxii. 10; Col. ii. 6). Faith is acceptance. Paul never gives a formal definition of faith, but his practical definition was "taking Jesus as Lord." It follows, of course, from this view, that belief is, in Paul's

(3) Of faith.

thought, an activity of the *whole* man. It is first an activity of the understanding. For the Jew who accepts Jesus as Lord goes through a process of reasoning which results in the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah foretold by the prophets (Acts xxviii. 23); and the Gentile who accepts Jesus recognizes in Him a being who has a supreme claim upon his love and service. Again, accepting Jesus is plainly an act of the will. He is taken as one's personal Lord. In this lies the kernel of faith according to Paul. Faith is not belief in the Gospel as a true narrative, though it involves that; nor even belief that Jesus was the Messiah, though it involves that also; but it is *acceptance* of Jesus as personal Messiah and personal Lord. Finally, it is an act of the heart to receive Christ Jesus in His claims. Paul assumes that the Christian, from the very beginning of his new life, loves Christ, for Christ gives Himself in love, and expects a response so great and inclusive that only love can render it.

Therefore, since Paul thought of faith as the personal acceptance of Jesus Christ, he regarded it as an act of the whole man. It is manifest, then, that, in his thought, faith belongs to man as truly as grace belongs to God. He says that God foresaw the faith of believers, but not that their faith was decreed by Him (Rom. viii. 28-30). The end of His decree was that believers should be conformed unto the image of Christ. Whether faith is wrought by the irresistible action of God is a question to which Paul never alludes.¹ He always assumes that a man can repent and believe, if he will, for he regards these acts as duties (Acts xxvi. 19).

Paul considers faith to be the antithesis of works of

¹ Comp. Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 362.

the law. Works of the law are, in the language of Paul, efforts to *earn* salvation (Rom. iv. 4). Hence faith, though an activity of the whole man, is not a *work* in the technical sense of that term, for faith simply *receives*. It takes salvation as of grace, not of debt. Yet faith is sure to *work*, to be active (Gal. v. 6). A man of faith is a man of intense life (Phil. ii. 12). The very conception of faith as the acceptance of Jesus in His claims implies that it constantly urges to the highest manifestation of the life of Christ.

The case is different in the theology of the synagogue.¹ It is there taught that faith is a work like the fulfilment of the law. Every blessing from above presupposes some human work which earns it. "Without merit there is no deliverance." It was in view of the merit of Abraham's faith, according to some of the rabbis, that God created the world. The deliverance out of Egypt was earned in part by the faith of the Israelites, and of certain ones in particular. Some thought that the merit of Isaac, who offered himself on the altar, led God to raise the dead. But this view of faith is not found in Paul's writings. With him faith is the very antithesis of works of the law. It should, however, be noticed that "work" and "works" are sometimes both used in a good sense by Paul (1 Thess. i. 3; Eph. ii. 10). Both are natural manifestations of a living faith (Gal. v. 6). Paul worked, and he expected his converts to work, even to work out their salvation; but the motive was no longer the desire to earn salvation from a God of mere righteousness; it was rather love of a God who had acted in wondrous grace.

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 294-300.

Entrance into the new life involves activity on God's part, which is variously described in Paul's Epistles. Thus, God chooses and calls unto life (1 Cor. i. 27; Rom. viii. 30). He shines into the heart (2 Cor. iv. 6). He reconciles men unto Himself (2 Cor. v. 18-19). He circumcises (Col. ii. 11) and quickens (Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13). He creates anew in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15). He adopts and justifies (Rom. viii. 15, 23; ix. 4; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5; Rom. iii. 26). It will be seen at a glance that God's activity in connection with a man's entrance into the new life is more frequently and variously alluded to than is man's activity. Yet it is not therefore presented as a more real and necessary thing. The terms just given demand a brief consideration. The *choice* of believers was thought of by Paul, at least sometimes, as a choice made before time (2 Thess. ii. 13; Eph. i. 4), but this feature of it was always viewed ethically rather than theologically. It is mentioned for the comfort of believers, and to exalt the dignity of their calling. It is as though Paul had said, God has *always* been for us, He has *always* had believers in His mind, and has arranged all things for their good.

(4) Terms
used of
God's
activity.

A second aspect of the divine activity is the *call* to the sinner. This is from God (*e.g.* Rom. viii. 30; ix. 24), in Christ (2 Cor. v. 19; Phil. iii. 14), through the Gospel (2 Thess. ii. 14), and is a call unto holiness (1 Cor. i. 2), unto salvation (2 Thess. ii. 13-14), unto the kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. ii. 12), unto the peace of Christ (Col. iii. 15), and unto eternal life (1 Tim. vi. 12). As God is the author of salvation, so He, not Christ, is the author of the call to the individual soul. The call is realized, historically, in Christ. God

was in Him reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Cor. v. 19). The call of God, uttered as it were in heaven (Phil. iii. 14), is uttered on earth in Christ, now no longer directly, but in His messengers (Rom. x. 15-17; xv. 18; Eph. ii. 17). The call is for all men, and is summed up by Paul as a call to repent and believe in Jesus Christ (Acts xx. 21; xxvi. 19). Beyond the acceptance of Christ, but really involved in that, for all things are the believer's because he is Christ's, the call of God is a call to the attainment of holiness, peace, and salvation here, to the kingdom and glory of God, and eternal life hereafter. The call has these things in view. Those who accept this call of God are "the called" or "the elect" (Rom. i. 6-7; viii. 28-30).

Borrowed very likely from Paul's own experience by Damascus is the suggestive language of 2 Cor. iv. 6, of which there is also an echo in Eph. i. 18. Here, in analogy with the creation of physical light in the beginning, God is said to shine in the heart in order to give knowledge of Christ as the one who manifests God's glory. In parallelism with this activity of God, the god of this world is said to blind the minds of the unbelieving that they may not behold the glory of Christ (2 Cor. iv. 4). God enlightens the eyes, Satan blinds them.

As Paul beheld the glory of God on the face of Jesus Christ, and was henceforth a disciple of Christ, so he thinks of others as having an analogous experience. God shines in the heart, and His illumination consists in knowledge of Christ. That is to say, there is a revelation of Christ unto the heart of the believer. This figure concerns primarily the intellectual side of conversion, but is not to be thought of as wholly independent of the will.

The next figure to be noticed in which Paul describes God's activity in man's entrance into the new life concerns chiefly the will and feeling. It is that of reconciliation. A man is reconciled when he is induced to lay aside his enmity toward God (Rom. viii. 7; Col. i. 21), and this is accomplished in and through Jesus Christ, through Him as the expression of the divine love, and through the spectacle of His suffering on our behalf (2 Cor. v. 14, 20; Rom. v. 8). Involved in this divine love and adapted to move the heart of man to a changed feeling toward God is the announcement of the forgiveness of sin and of salvation through faith (2 Cor. v. 19, 21).

Another designation of the divine activity is circumcision (Rom. ii. 29; Phil. iii. 3; Col. ii. 11). This is analogous to that physical circumcision which admitted one to the privileges of the Old Covenant. It is Christ's, inasmuch as it is realized only in fellowship with Him (Col. ii. 11). It concerns the heart and consists in putting off the flesh, that is, the unrenewed nature (Rom. ii. 29; Col. ii. 11). This putting away, as the context shows, is not thought of as accomplished by man, but by God.

God's activity in man's entrance into the new life is emphasized in the figures of "resurrection," a moral resurrection with Christ, and "creation." This latter word seems to be used twice at least to emphasize the radical difference between a true Christian and a merely nominal believer, like many of the Jews of Paul's acquaintance (Gal. vi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17). The true Christian is called a new creation, because he is so different from his former self. This new creation is realized only in Christ, and is even spoken of as the

result of being in Him (2 Cor. v. 17). Thus it is regarded as a strong figure to convey the difference between the renewed and the unrenewed heart rather than as specifically descriptive of God's activity in man's entrance into the new life. But in the passages in Ephesians and Colossians it can hardly be taken in this sense. There it has a direct bearing on the *mode* of coming into the new life. Yet even here it is to be thought of as something relative, something germinal, rather than complete, for the new man is *being* renewed. His renewal is a process continued through life (comp. Rom. xii. 2).

Peculiar to Paul is the term *adoption* (*υιοθεσία*), the idea of which is Roman rather than Jewish. Once it designates the choice of Israel to be the covenant people (Rom. ix. 4). Once it designates the final entrance into sonship, when redemption shall be complete (Rom. viii. 23). More frequently it designates the new relation to God into which man enters through faith in Christ (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5). It does not imply, in Paul's thought, that a man is in no real sense God's son prior to adoption; but it does imply that his former estate was no better than that of a slave. If it belittles the sonship of the unconverted, it does so to glorify the sonship of believers.¹

It is important to notice that these activities of God concern the understanding, will, and heart, just as man's activity in entering upon the new life is an activity of the whole man. God illumines the mind, circumcises and reconciles the heart, quickens and delivers the will. Thus He meets man at every point. But Paul does not discuss the relation of these activities to each other,

¹ Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 188.

neither does he seek at all to discriminate them closely one from another.

One act of God in man's entrance into the new life is so important in Paul's teaching that it calls for special consideration. This is the act expressed by the verb *justify* (*δικαιοῦσθαι*). This word confessedly means, in the Old Testament ^{(5) Of justification in particular.} and in the Gospels, to declare righteous (Ex. xxiii. 7; Dt. xxv. 1; Luke vii. 29; x. 29). There is scarcely an exception to this usage in the Old Testament.¹ Now, since Paul had the common tradition of the teaching of Jesus, and since he nowhere indicates that he uses this word in a sense different from that which it had in the Old Testament and as employed by Jesus, it must be concluded that it has in his writings its ordinary meaning. To justify is to declare righteous.² Further, this is seen to be the meaning of the verb from Paul's use of the kindred noun (*δικαιοσύνη*). He employs this word in connection with men in two senses. He regards righteousness as a gift and also as an attainment (Rom. v. 17; 1 Cor. i. 30; Phil. i. 11). It is a gift of God, and it is an attainment of man. The latter of these meanings does not come into consideration here, for the verb *justify* denotes an action which belongs to God alone (Rom. iii. 26, 30; iv. 5; viii. 30). But the word *righteousness* in the other sense in which Paul uses it throws a clear light upon the meaning which he attached to the verb. For he contrasts the ministration of righteousness with the ministration of condemnation (2 Cor. iii. 9; Rom. v. 16-17).

¹ Trümpert, *Die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, etc., excerpts Is. liii. 2 and Dan. xii. 3.

² Comp. Pfeiderer, *Das Urchristenthum*, p. 247.

Hence the verb in question, which is rendered in English by the word *justify*, is the opposite of *condemn*. It means to acquit. It is therefore a term which implies sin; and because it denotes acquittal from sin and guilt, it necessarily involves a bringing into right relation to God (Rom. iii. 23-24; v. 1). Being justified we have peace with God, or, to follow the preferable Greek reading, we *ought* to have peace with God. We have a right to such peace, and it is our own fault if we do not possess it. But the word *justify*, while it implies the creation of a harmonious relation between God and the one justified, implies more than this. For God does not take men and justify them irrespective of the condition of their hearts. Only those who believe in Christ are declared righteous by God (Rom. iii. 28, 30; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 8); or, if we think of the times before Christ, only those who had faith in God. This is the indispensable basis of justification. If a man believes in Christ, God declares him righteous. He is acquitted, and feels himself a son of God. Justification, therefore, is neither making a man righteous, nor declaring a man righteous when there is nothing in him which affords adequate ground for this declaration. When speaking of Paul's doctrine of justification, it is needful to bear in mind the depth of his conception of faith. It is an acceptance of Jesus as Lord, in which all the heights of holiness are potentially present.¹ A man with faith in Jesus may be exceedingly sinful and imperfect. Yet there is an immeasurable gulf between his moral state and that of a man without faith in Jesus. When a man has passed from unbelief to belief, it is scarcely a fiction to call him righteous. It is an incomplete statement, but it is

¹ Comp. Sanday, *The Expositor*, viii. 40.

essentially true rather than essentially fictitious. The beginning of the Christian life is fictitious only in this respect, that God treats the man who has begun that life as though he had already *realized* the standard which he has just espoused.

The act of justifying a man is an act of free grace (Rom. iii. 24; v. 17), and the apostle emphasizes this truth in opposition to the doctrine of a justification earned by works of the law (Gal. ii. 21). It is conditioned on faith, but faith in Paul's view, as we have seen, is the very opposite of works in the technical sense of that word, for faith simply receives. As this acquittal by God is said to be of grace, so Paul speaks of a righteousness which is of grace (Rom. i. 17; iii. 21-22). Here it is important to observe the distinction that was made above, between righteousness as a gift and righteousness as an attainment. Righteousness as a gift is simply and only the gracious acquittal, on the ground of faith, which involves a right relation to God. Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. The only quality of Abraham which here comes to view is faith, and this is not regarded as a gift of God. The gift is the announcement that God will regard this faith as righteousness. And this gift can be secured through faith alone. If it could have been secured by law, Christ would have died in vain (Gal. ii. 21). The blameless righteousness which Paul once thought that he possessed through the law was only a deception, for at that very time he was in bondage to the law of sin (Rom. vii. 23). It is true, the law was designed to be unto life (Rom. vii. 10), but not by way of a perfect performance of its commands.

By the side of this righteousness of God, Paul knows

of a righteousness which the believer *attains* through life-long endeavor. This is righteousness as opposed to iniquity (2 Cor. vi. 14), to which the believer is to be a servant (Rom. vii. 13-19), with whose fruits he is to be filled, and which in the conflict of life is to be his breast-plate (Phil. i. 11; Eph. vi. 14). Doubtless Paul thought of this righteousness as conditioned on the other, for he thought of none of man's acts as acceptable to God until man comes into right relation to Him. When this right relation is established, there may, and indeed must be fruits of righteousness, and all that belongs to Christian character.

The state of heart in view of which God declares one righteous may be regarded as a part of sanctification,¹ as indeed its beginning,² but the act of justification does not make that state of heart. It has no immediate influence whatever upon the moral condition of a man.

At no point was Paul's doctrine more completely at variance with the doctrine of the synagogue than at this. The Jewish theologians taught that there are many ways of securing justification, as keeping the commandments, doing good works, or having the good works of others attributed to one.³

¹ Comp. Vincent, *Critical Commentary on Philipians and Philemon*, p. 123.

² Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 147.

³ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 267-277, 280-289.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW LIFE

THE new life in Christ is thought of by Paul as a life continuously and intensely active. His favorite expression for it is a *walk* or a *walking about*, an echo of what had been said of Jesus, that He went about doing good (1 Thess. ii. 12; 1 Cor. iii. 3; Rom. viii. 4, etc.). A life of activity in which the whole man is concerned is also involved in the expressions "sowing unto the Spirit" (Gal. vi. 8), "growing up in all things into Christ" (Eph. ii. 21; iv. 15), "putting on the new man" (Eph. iv. 24), and "seeking the things that are above" (Col. iii. 1). The Christian life is a building of something on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. iii. 11). The Christian is engaged in a process of transformation, metamorphosis (Rom. xii. 2), in which, certainly not without great effort, there is to be a mental renewing, and the end of which is the proving of the perfect will of God. It is even said that the end for which the Christian was *created* is good works (Eph. ii. 10). The activity of the new life is set forth more vividly still in the figures of the *race* and the *fight* (1 Cor. ix. 24-26; Gal. v. 7; Eph. vi. 11-17; 1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7). Paul says of the Galatians that they ran well, and he exhorts the Corinthians to run

(1) General conceptions of the new life.

in such a manner that they may attain. This running is to continue until the end. Life is also a fight, a wrestling in the ring, and so serious that nothing short of the whole armor of God is sufficient for the Christian's need. A second general conception of the new life in Christ is that of *growth*. There is increase in love and in the knowledge of God (1 Thess. iii. 12; Col. i. 10). There is a changing more and more glorious into the image of the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 18); a growing into a holy temple for a habitation of God in the Spirit (Eph. ii. 21-22); a growing up in all things into Christ (Eph. iv. 15). The possessor of this life counts not himself perfect, but is continually stretching forward to things which are before (Phil. iii. 12-13). Thus the new life is, according to Paul, a life of sublimest activity and of unending growth toward the ideal manhood in Christ.

The new life is in Christ, and therefore is not and cannot be under the law (1 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 1; Gal. v. 2; Rom. vi. 14; vii. 1-6). Christ and the law as powers controlling life are mutually exclusive (Gal. v. 1, 2, 6; Rom. vii. 4). If we are in Christ, we are dead unto the law; and if we seek to be justified by the law, we are severed from Christ (Gal. v. 4). To be in Christ is to be free (Gal. ii. 4); to be under the law, is to be under a yoke of bondage (Gal. iv. 25; v. 1). Christ and the law of works exclude each other as debt and grace (Rom. iv. 4-5). Christ is the end of the law as a means of obtaining righteousness (Rom. x. 4); in Him a new order takes the place of the old.

This view of the law was naturally in sharpest contrast with the teaching of the synagogue, according

(2) Relation
of the new
life to the
law.

to which man's first duty is to know the law, and his second duty is to do it; and according to which also the law has power to sanctify, to turn the impenitent to God, and to comfort.¹

Paul's antithesis between Christ and the law was brought out most sharply by the efforts of the Judaizers, who sought to bring his converts under the law of Moses.² Such was the case in the churches of Galatia, in the church at Corinth, and elsewhere. Under the stress of this Jewish antagonism the doctrine of the Christian's relation to the law was developed, and in view of that fact it must be understood. The law from which the Christian is free is the law as an ordinance of works through which righteousness is to be obtained, that law which is "against us" (Col. ii. 14). This follows from Paul's constant antithesis of law and grace. Circumcision, observance of days and months and seasons and years, distinctions in meat and drink, these and all such ordinances are naught to the Christian (Gal. v. 6; iv. 10; Col. ii. 16). Paul tells the Corinthians to eat what meat they find in the shambles, whether clean or unclean from a Jewish point of view; and to eat what is set before them in an unbeliever's house, having regard only to a brother's conscience (1 Cor. x. 25-27). The ordinances of the law had a mission in foreshadowing the coming salvation, but that mission was completed when this salvation had come (Col. ii. 17; Gal. iii. 24).

When Paul speaks of being free from the law, it is the law as an institute of righteousness which is meant, not the Old Testament as a body of moral and spiritual

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 20-25.

² Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 225; Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Paul*, pp. 94-96.

truths. This he frequently quotes as the authoritative word of God, and assumes that his readers are familiar with it. He finds his doctrine of justification by faith in the Old Testament (*e.g.* Rom. i. 17; x. 6-13). It is not new with him; it is not new even with Christ; it has been the law of spiritual life from the beginning of history. Thus, for him the very essence of the Gospel, as far as that can be stated in words, was in the law (Gal. iii. 8). So the doctrine of the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 4), of universal sinfulness (Rom. iii. 10-18), of the Christian's freedom from external law (Rom. vii. 1-6), of the call of the Gentiles (Rom. ix. 24-26), of the ultimate redemption of Israel (Rom. xi. 26), of liberality (2 Cor. ix. 9), of sanctification (2 Cor. vi. 16-18), of a general judgment (Rom. xiv. 11), not to mention minor points, are all found by Paul in the Old Testament.

But while Paul teaches freedom from the Mosaic law of works, he does not think of the Christian as free from all law. Even grace is thought of as being *over* the Christian, something that controls his life (Rom. vi. 14), though from within (2 Cor. v. 14). The Christian is a servant to obedience, to righteousness, and to God (Rom. vi. 16, 18, 22). He dies to the law in order to be joined to Christ, to be subject to Him, as the wife is subject to her husband (Rom. vii. 4). Even the Gospel is called a law, the law of faith (Rom. iii. 27), the law of Christ (Gal. vi. 2). But law for the Christian differs most widely from the old law as apprehended by the Jews, inasmuch as it is in harmony with a perfect liberty in Christ (Gal. ii. 4; v. 1). It is not a yoke of bondage, but a constraint of love (2 Cor. v. 14).

The development of the new life is dependent upon two elements,—human effort and the Spirit of God.

Men work out their own salvation, and God works in them (Phil. ii. 12). The doctrine of grace, far from licensing sin, puts the Christian under sacred obligation to live a holy life (Rom. vi. 1-4). As Christ died unto sin and lives unto God, so the Christian, being vitally connected with Christ, must share His experiences. He must count himself dead unto sin, but alive unto God (Rom. vi. 11). Since the will of God is our sanctification (1 Thess. iv. 3), and since He desires that one should be filled unto all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19), living unto God means unceasing effort to realize this divine purpose, elsewhere summed up as putting off the old man and putting on the new man (Eph. iv. 24). From this effort, while life lasts, there is no release (Phil. iii. 13). Even Paul the apostle, at the close of his rich experience and fruitful life, comes before us as a man with eager, upturned face, stretching forward to the things that are before.

(3) Means
of growth.
(a) Human
effort.

It is plainly involved in this teaching of growth, that sanctification is not completed while man is in the flesh. No limit of years is set when the transformation into the image of the Lord shall be perfect (2 Cor. iii. 18); when the sanctification which God works shall be complete (1 Thess. v. 23); when the prayer shall be fulfilled that the Ephesians may attain unto all the fulness of God, unto the stature of full-grown men in Christ (Eph. iii. 19; iv. 13). The exhortations to Christian development are addressed to all believers alike, the aged as well as the young. It is true that they are new creatures in Christ (1 Cor. i. 2; Gal. vi. 15), and yet they are nevertheless liable to sin (Gal. v. 16; Eph. iv. 25, etc.). The statements that old things are

passed away, that the old man has been crucified with Christ, that our life is hid with Christ in God, and that we are sanctified in Christ Jesus, are ideally true, but only ideally (2 Cor. v. 17; Rom. vi. 6; Col. iii. 3; 1 Cor. i. 2). They are descriptive of a change, begun but not accomplished.¹ Paul, near the close of his life, said that he was not perfect, and more than this surely could not be claimed for any of his converts.

When, therefore, Paul speaks of his converts as unblamable in holiness at the Parousia (1 Thess. iii. 13), unreprouvable in the day of Christ (1 Cor. i. 8), and expresses his conviction that God will perfect that good work which He has begun in the Philippians until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6), his language must be taken as language of devout hope and longing. It is, doubtless, to be thought of as having a blessed fulfilment, for Christ receives His own in that day and takes them into His eternal kingdom, but it cannot be taken as having an absolute fulfilment, and as teaching that sanctification is completed with the completion of the earthly life.

In the development and activities of the new life, the Holy Spirit has a constant and vital part. His help is not confined to a few individuals, to prophets and teachers, and those who are called to some special work, as the Jewish theology² taught, and as many in the early Church believed,³ but it is equally bestowed upon every disciple of Christ.

Paul does not discuss the interrelation of the human

¹ The "perfect" of 1 Cor. ii. 6 are relatively mature Christians, as appears from the context. ² Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 186.

³ Gunkel, *Die Wirkungen des Heiligen Geistes*, etc., p. 82.

and divine elements in the production of Christian character. He assumes that both are real, and that both work together in the most intimate manner. He speaks of love as a fruit of the Spirit, but also regards it as a human attainment (Gal. v. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 12; 2 Thess. i. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 11). So with all the elements of Christian character.

At the very outset of the Christian life the Spirit begets in the soul a filial feeling toward God. The cry of "Abba, Father" is, in an important sense, His cry (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15). The conviction of the believer that he is a child of God is a witnessing of the Holy Spirit with his spirit (Rom. viii. 16). And the presence of the Spirit is a pledge to the believer that he shall receive a child's portion in the future (2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 14; iv. 30). He is the "earnest-money" of our full inheritance, the "first fruit" of our complete redemption (Eph. i. 14; Rom. viii. 23). The believer is sealed in Him, or sealed by Him in Christ (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30), that is, the firm conviction of the soul in regard to the inheritance and complete redemption is wrought by the Spirit.

And the entire compass of the Christian's life between his first cry of "Abba, Father" and his realization of the completed salvation in heaven is, according to Paul, in the Spirit. By Him the soul is transformed into the image of Christ, by Him worship is rendered unto God, and by Him the activities which belong to the Christian are sustained and directed (2 Cor. iii. 18; Phil. iii. 3; Eph. vi. 18; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7).

Paul emphasizes the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in the believer. No man can belong to Christ unless he has Christ's spirit (Rom. vii. 9). A true believer

without the Spirit would be a contradiction in terms. The very life of the Christian as a Christian is due to the Spirit, and only as he leads this life according to the mind of the Spirit can he regard himself as a son of God (Rom. viii. 14). It is a constant and all-pervasive principle that the believer should be led by the Spirit. It is only thus that he is free from the law, and only thus that he escapes the lusts of the flesh (2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. v. 16-17). The Spirit as the Spirit of Christ is closely associated by Paul with the production of every element of Christian character. He is the source of consecration and holiness (1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Tit. iii. 5). The cleansing accomplished in baptism and the progressive moral purification, by which the call of God is, in part, realized, are both in the Spirit. Likewise the dedication to God, which is associated with cleansing and justification, is fulfilled in the Spirit. And yet when Paul speaks of the Spirit as holy, he does not, as a rule, think of an ethical quality of the Spirit, though this is sometimes in the foreground (1 Thess. iv. 8); but he uses the term *Holy Spirit* as it was used in the Jewish theology,¹ to designate the Spirit as belonging to God.

In like manner the Spirit is the source of the believer's knowledge of God and His will. We received the Spirit which is of God, that we might *know* the things that are freely given us by God (1 Cor. ii. 12), and in this way we come to have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. ii. 16). It is *in* the Spirit, or *by* the Spirit, that the mystery of Christ has been revealed unto the apostles and prophets (Eph. iii. 5). The glory of the Lord which we see and reflect, we see and reflect in and by

¹ Gloel, *Der Heilige Geist*, etc., pp. 226-234.

the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17-18). The conceptions of "walking by the Spirit," "being led by the Spirit," and "living by the Spirit" all imply that the mind of the Spirit is the norm of the Christian life. The thought of God is made known through Him. Hence Paul says of the words of Christian prophets, "the *Spirit* saith expressly" (1 Tim. iv. 1); also that the word of wisdom is through the Spirit, the word of knowledge is according to the Spirit, and the ecstatic utterances of religious feeling are wrought by the same Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 8-11). Yet Paul by no means associates the activity of the Spirit merely with man's intellectual faculty. This was the case in the Jewish theology,¹ but Paul's conception was widely different from this. He teaches that, as Christ is received by the believer into his entire being, to control his thought, his will and his feelings, so the Holy Spirit has a complete sway. His fruits are fruits in whose production the believer is wholly involved. If joy and gentleness and peace concern the heart especially, self-control involves the will in particular; while longsuffering, love, faith, and teaching involve the understanding as well as the will and the heart (Gal. v. 22). The entire man from centre to circumference is the temple of the Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 16-17). All his aspirations, his thoughts, and his purposes are to be in the Spirit, since he himself is in the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit who can thus enter into the thought and feeling of the believer, and who from within moulds the entire Christian character, is represented by Paul as rendering a service in the heart parallel to that which Christ renders now in heaven. He intercedes for the believer (Rom. viii. 26, 27, 34). Since He is the Spirit

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 186.

of Christ, we may suppose that Paul thought of the intercession of Christ at the right hand of God, and the intercession of the Spirit in the heart, as parts of one divine activity in man's behalf. This intercession is sometimes expressed in the believer's unutterable groanings. Words of human speech cannot voice it. It is natural to think here of the phenomenon of ecstatic speech which was common in the Corinthian church. Paul was writing in Corinth, and we know that he regarded the glossolaly as wrought by the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 2). Yet even if he had this phenomenon in mind when he spoke of "unutterable groanings," the truth of his words need not be limited to this peculiar and temporary manifestation of the religious life. It seems rather to include the deepest, intensest longing of the Spirit for the complete salvation of God—longings that lie too deep for words.

Paul was a practical, religious teacher rather than a philosophical student of religion. When speaking of the Holy Spirit, his interest is in holy character and life rather than in any question as to the essence of the Spirit or His relation to God. He is certain what the fruits of the Spirit are, but he does not discuss the Spirit's personality.¹

In the preceding paragraphs we have seen what he was in the habit of saying about the Spirit. His utterances are ethical and practical. It seems to be impossible to go back of these and define accurately what he thought of the nature of the Spirit, and of His relation to Christ and to God. It is probable, therefore, that he did not regard these as questions of vital importance for his readers.

¹ Comp. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 242.

Touching the nature of the Spirit there is ground in the Letters of Paul for various views. Thus, when he speaks of "quenching" the Spirit, and when he says that all Christians are made to "drink" of one Spirit (1 Thess. v. 19; 1 Cor. xii. 13), his language suggests that the Spirit is regarded as a holy influence or as the vital force in the believer's life. And under this head it would be possible to enumerate a large number of passages in which Christians are said to be variously aided by the Spirit (*e.g.* Rom. viii. 13; ix. 1; Gal. v. 25). The thought of a holy influence from God may be the equivalent of the Spirit in these places. But, on the other hand, when Paul speaks of the Spirit as capable of being "grieved," and of making intercession for believers, and of searching the deep things of God (Eph. iv. 30; Rom. viii. 26; 1 Cor. ii. 10), we cannot think that the Spirit was to him simply a holy influence or a vital force. As a rule, the language of Paul regarding the Spirit is distinctly personal, but the exceptions, as we have seen, are significant.

Again, as a general thing, the Spirit is spoken of as the Spirit of God (*e.g.* Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 16; Gal. iv. 29; Phil. iii. 3), sometimes as separate from Him (*e.g.* Rom. v. 5), and sometimes as identical with Him (*e.g.* 1 Cor. ii. 11),¹ but in certain passages He is called the Spirit of Christ (*e.g.* Rom. viii. 9), sometimes as though separate from Christ (*e.g.* Gal. iv. 6), and sometimes as identical with him (2 Cor. iii. 17-18). When the apostle says that God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying "Abba, Father," one might readily suppose that he means by "Spirit of His Son" a spirit like that of Jesus, for when our spirit is like His, we do say "Abba,

¹ Holtzmann, influenced by this passage, speaks of the Spirit as the principle of self-consciousness in God.

Father." But we are taken into a different sphere of thought when he says, "The Lord is the Spirit."¹ These words which affirm the closest relation between the Lord and the Spirit, if not that they are identical, bring to mind the utterances attributed to Jesus in John's Gospel, which make the Spirit the *alter ego* of Jesus. We are led to the same conception of the relation of the Spirit to Christ by the fact that in certain parallel passages Paul seems to use the names *Christ* and *Spirit* interchangeably. Thus, for example, he says, at one time, that we are sanctified in the Holy Spirit (Rom. xv. 16), and again that we are sanctified in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. i. 2). In like manner, to speak in the Holy Spirit is not different from speaking in Christ (1 Cor. xii. 3; 2 Cor. ii. 17).

From these data it is manifest that Paul's Epistles contain no hard and fast doctrine of the Spirit, either as to His nature or His relation to Christ and to God. For such doctrine we must come down to times long subsequent to that of the apostle. His thought on the practical aspect of the truth of the Spirit was clear and positive; on the metaphysical aspect, scanty and indeterminate. He had no doubt that, in and through the Spirit, believers have vital fellowship with the Father, and this was for him the great reality.

We next inquire after the truths which Paul used with his converts as motives to Christian living. The first and by far the most important cluster of motives are those which he finds in the character and plan of God. In God, not in himself and not in the history of mankind, Paul finds the

(4) Motives of the new life.

¹ Notice, he does not say, the Lord is spirit, but "The Lord is *the* Spirit," thus seeming to identify the risen Lord with the Holy Spirit.

great spring of efficient endeavor. Thus he appeals to the faithfulness of God and of Christ. On this he rests his assurance that the Thessalonians will be wholly sanctified in due time (1 Thess. v. 23-24), and this is also to be the spring of their labor in seeking to realize the apostle's prayer for them. Again, Paul appeals to the faithfulness of Jesus as the ground of his expectation that the readers will be guarded from the evil one, and established, though beset by pressing dangers on every side (2 Thess. iii. 3). With the Corinthians he appeals to the faithfulness of God as the motive to endurance in trials (1 Cor. x. 13). The mercy of God, as that has been manifested in the gift of Christ, through whom, by faith, men may secure righteousness, is a great motive to consecration of life (Rom. xii. 1-2). In view of this the Christians at Rome are urged to sacrifice their bodies, that is, to bring their life into full accord with the confession of their lips.

The person of Jesus, especially His love and gentleness, are fundamental motives for the new life. The name of Jesus should move the Corinthians to unity (1 Cor. i. 10), and move the Romans to pray for Paul (Rom. xv. 30). Paul appeals to the love of Jesus as a motive to liberality (2 Cor. viii. 9), to unselfishness of life in general (2 Cor. v. 14), to a love of the wife by her husband (Eph. v. 25), and to a walk in love for all believers (Eph. v. 1; Gal. ii. 20; Rom. xv. 3). Again, the apostle prays that the meekness and gentleness of Christ may be a motive to the cultivation of meekness among the contentious Corinthians (2 Cor. x. 1).

A second group of motives are those that centre in the dignity of the Christian's calling. The Corinthians are to drop party disputes and be at one, for all things

are theirs (1 Cor. iii. 21-23). They are urged to purity of life, because their bodies are members of Christ (1 Cor. vi. 15). They belong to God, and therefore should glorify Him in the use of the body (1 Cor. vi. 19). They are exhorted to the harmonious development each of his own gift by the consideration that each alike is a member of Christ's body (1 Cor. xii. 27). The same motive appears in the Epistles of the Roman imprisonment. The churches of Asia Minor, and the Philippians as well, are urged to let their high calling be a motive to high living (Eph. iv. 1; Phil. i. 27).

A third group of motives are those which concern man's regard for God and for his fellow-man. With Paul himself the desire to testify the Gospel of the grace of God, and so to accomplish the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, was so great that he held not his life of any account in comparison with it (Acts xx. 24). The brother's welfare was for him, and he held that it should be for others, the determining motive in deciding the burning questions of meat and drink. "If meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore" (1 Cor. viii. 13). "It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth" (Rom. xiv. 21). Seeking the profit of the brother is living to the glory of God; and a regard for God's glory, Paul teaches, should enter as a motive into all action (1 Cor. x. 31). The brother's welfare was also a motive in the endurance of hardship, and brotherly love a motive to prayer (2 Tim. ii. 10; Rom. xv. 30). Paul begs his Roman brethren by the love of the Spirit in them, that is, their Christian love, begotten of the Spirit, to pray for him (Gal. v. 22). He recognizes that the love of Christ is the proper in-

centive in preaching Christ (Phil. i. 15-16), and says that for himself the desire to please Christ is a motive so mighty that it enables him to rejoice in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses (2 Cor. xii. 10).

The fourth and last group of motives in Paul are those which he finds in the great events of the future. The issues of Christian and un-Christian living are held up by him for encouragement and warning. Sowing to the flesh insures a harvest of corruption, and sowing to the Spirit a harvest of eternal life (Gal. vi. 8). The certainty that the Lord will not suffer our labor to be in vain is a motive to steadfastness and to an abounding in service (1 Cor. xv. 58). The eternal glory prepared for the believer is a motive to patient endurance of suffering (2 Cor. iv. 16-v. 1; Rom. viii. 18). The Romans are exhorted to put on the armor of light, to lead a Christlike life because the day of the Parousia is at hand (Rom. xiii. 12), and once Paul adduces the appearance before the judgment seat of Christ as a motive to please Him (2 Cor. v. 9-10). But the desire to gain Christ was doubtless a motive of greater power in his own life, and in his thought for other Christians, than was the judgment seat. It was this that led him to give up all things, and that gave unwearied strength to stretch forward and press on (Phil. iii. 13-14).

These deep and strong motives were appealed to by Paul with a view to the attainment of certain ideals. The first and most prominent ideal toward ⁽⁵⁾ Ideals of which Paul directs the thought of his con- the new life. verts is the ideal of *character*. This ideal of the new life is presented, as are the others, in concrete form. It is

summed up in the one word *Christ*. The measure of the stature of His fulness is the end toward which the Church is to strive (Eph. iii. 19; iv. 13; Col. ii. 10). This fulness involves unity of faith *in* the Son of God, and unity of knowledge *of* the Son of God. It also implies that they who have attained it are incapable of being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; they are immovably established in knowledge. Yet more comprehensively, it embraces every aspect of Christian growth. In every particular Christ is the norm.

The same fundamental truth, though with change of figure, is contained in the exhortation *to put on* the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xiii. 14). The Christian is to show to the world Christ's method of thinking and Christ's method of acting. He is to express Christ's character. In like manner, Paul teaches that in the new man, whether Greek or Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, there is a process of renewal after the image of God, that is, according to the thought of God embodied in Christ (Col. i. 15; iii. 10-11). This ideal of character was contained in the eternal purpose of God, for the object in all His preparations for those who should accept His grace was that they might be conformed unto the image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29). This ideal of character, which is more prominent in the Epistles of the imprisonment than elsewhere, is variously specialized. It involves serious thought and effort to secure whatsoever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Phil. iv. 8). It is as wide as all virtue and all praise. The unselfishness of Christ (Phil. ii. 5-8), His spirit of service (Acts xx. 35), His love (Eph. v. 21), His meekness and gentleness (2 Cor. x. 1), His patience (2 Thess. iii. 5), His dying to sin and living to God

(Rom. vi. 1-11), His kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiving spirit (Eph. iv. 32)—these are some of the details of the ideal character which are mentioned by Paul.

A second ideal of the new life is the ideal of *service*. This is Christ in manifestation. The old man has been crucified and buried with Christ (Rom. vi. 46; Gal. ii. 20). The "I" that lives is a new creation, a new man (Gal. vi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10). And the central truth about this new "I" is that Christ lives in it (Gal. vi. 17, etc.), and therefore its expression in word and deed is the expression of Christ. Hence Christians are called an epistle of Christ (2 Cor. iii. 3). This figure touches both their character and its manifestation. It means that in them and in their lives men are to see the thought and wish of Christ. He is the author of the epistle; first, last, and in all ways it must utter His mind. In the same manner, Paul speaks of those who hear the faithful messengers of Christ as hearing Christ (Rom. x. 14; Eph. iv. 21). He Himself is abroad in the earth, preaching in the person of His disciple. The perfect manifestation of the indwelling Christ would be the accomplishment of Paul's ideal of service. The apostle's own life is the best illustration of his ideal. It shows that this calls for the utmost willingness of sacrifice. It precludes the holding of one's life as of any account, as dear to one's self (Acts xx. 24). To fulfil the ideal, therefore, there is needed the martyr spirit.

Paul's life also illustrates what his Epistles teach, that his ideal of service is an ideal that covers the entire life. He knows of no division of life into the secular and the religious. Everything is to be in the name of the Lord (Col. iii. 17). To live is always and everywhere Christ

(Phil. i. 21). One day for the Christian is as sacred as another (Rom. xiv. 5), one calling as divine as another (1 Cor. xii. 12-27). Slaves as well as apostles can adorn the doctrine of God in all things (Tit. ii. 10). Christ is as supremely the life of one believer as of another (Col. iii. 4). And again, as both the life and the Epistles of Paul show, his ideal of service is not only as broad as all life and as intense as the martyr spirit, but it is also an ideal calling for service with a single end. It must be service unto Christ, the sole aim of which is to please Him (2 Cor. v. 9, 15).

A third ideal of the new life presented in the writings of Paul is the ideal of *destiny*. This is summed up in the thought of gaining Christ (Phil. iii. 8). This is indeed already accomplished in part, but its perfect realization, which is the sum of all desires, is future. To gain Christ means to secure Him for one's own possession, in place of the things lost (Phil. iii. 8). It involves, then, the possession of Christ's righteousness (Phil. iii. 9), knowing Him, sharing the resurrection of the righteous, and securing the prize of the high calling of God (Phil. iii. 10, 14).

Under the stress of persecution, the aspect of this ideal which prominently appears is the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. ii. 14; Rom. viii. 17), and the same thought occurs in an exhortation to holy living (Phil. iii. 21; Col. iii. 1-4). To be in keeping with that future glory the soul must now be putting on righteousness and heavenly-mindedness. When overwhelmed with the toils and anxieties of his mission, the aspect of this ideal of which Paul speaks is being *at home* with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 2-3). The culmination of the comfort extended by the apostle

to those who sorrowed for departed friends, under the delusion that these would not share in the glory of the Parousia and the subsequent blessedness, was that those who had fallen asleep in Jesus, no less than those who should be alive at His coming, should be forever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 17). This is the great blessing of the future.

Such were the ideals of Paul. But every step toward them involved struggle. There were foes within and without against which Paul must warn his converts. The first and one of the most dangerous of these was *legalism*. This was Jewish in its origin, and its first advocates were always nominally Christian Jews (Acts xv. 5). Their position was that circumcision and keeping the law were still necessary to salvation (Gal. v. 2; vi. 12). They called themselves in some cases apostles of Christ, but were more truly apostles of the law, pharisaically understood. According to Paul, they had no profit from Christ, but were in reality messengers of Satan (Gal. v. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 15). Their demand upon Paul's converts was a blow at the central doctrine of the sufficiency of Christ's redemption, and therefore it stirred the apostle to the very depths of his soul. He met their position with three arguments. First, it was unscriptural. The fundamental teaching of the Old Testament was that salvation must be through faith (Gal. iii. 6-14), and faith was before the law (Gal. iii. 15-18). One who relies on his works for salvation is under a curse. Second, Paul held that legalism is shown to be a false doctrine by the experience of believers. The Galatians had received the Holy Spirit by faith, and not by works. Miracles were being wrought among them by faith, not by the

doctrine of legalism (Gal. iii. 2-3). Third, Paul appealed to the reason of his converts. They could see that Christ died for naught if righteousness was through the law, that Christ and circumcision were mutually exclusive (Gal. v. 2-6). They had experienced freedom in Christ, and could see that the doctrine of the Judaizers would be a yoke of bondage (Gal. ii. 4; 2 Cor. xi. 20). Not essentially different was it from that bondage which they as pagan worshippers had experienced (Gal. iv. 8-11.) From their Christian standpoint the doctrines of the legalists, no less than the doctrines of their former idolatry, were weak and beggarly elements. They could surely see that meat cannot commend a man to God. Of whatever sort it may be, it makes no one better or worse (1 Cor. viii. 8). Thus, legalism is an unreasonable thing because a step backward, a turning from the substance to the shadow (Col. ii. 16-17).

A second danger to which the new life was exposed, particularly in Asia Minor and to some extent in Rome, was *asceticism*. There were some Christians who held that meat and wine are in themselves unclean, and should not be used (Rom. xiv.); some who thought that severity to the body is a means of godliness (Col. ii. 23; 1 Tim. iv. 8); and some, particularly in the later part of Paul's work, who held that celibacy is a Christian duty, and sexual abstinence also a duty in those who are married (1 Tim. iv. 3). Because the asceticism of this last passage appears in Marcion in the second century, it by no means follows that the Epistle was written in the time of Marcion, for we have asceticism in regard to meat and drink in Romans, and 1 Cor. vii. 5 shows that even in 58 A.D. some felt that higher sanctity attaches to the unmarried state.

Paul's doctrine as touching this error is, first, that nothing, that is, no sort of meat or drink, is unclean in itself (Rom. xiv. 14). Every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it be received with thanksgiving (1 Tim. iv. 4). Paul teaches the same truth in another connection, when he bids his converts eat whatsoever is sold in the market, since the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof (1 Cor. x. 25-26). And, second, subjection to ascetic ordinances is inconsistent with the risen life in Christ (Col. ii. 20-23). These things are all earthly elements, but the Christian is to be controlled by heavenly forces (Col. iii. 1). They who teach this ascetic doctrine are fallen from the faith (1 Tim. iv. 1). The positive principle which Paul lays down concerning the use of meat and drink, in themselves good, is that of regard for the brother's welfare (Rom. xiv. 15, 21).

Another danger among the Gentile converts was that of *relapsing into heathen sensuality*, especially of a sexual kind. This was the most terrible phase of Gentile immorality (Rom. i. 18-32). The doctrine which Paul advanced to meet this danger emphasizes two points. First, the vital relation of the Christian to Christ. He is a member of the Lord's body, and shall he take a member of Christ and make it a member of a harlot? Shall one take a temple of the Holy Spirit and degrade it to such a use? Paul uses the same argument against relapsing into idolatry (1 Cor. x. 14-22). A second point which Paul emphasizes is that sexual uncleanness excludes from the kingdom of God, and exposes the offender to His wrath (Gal. v. 19-21; Eph. v. 5; Col. iii. 5). Thus widely did the new ethics differ from the common thought and practice of the classical world.

A fourth danger of the new life was that of *denying*

the faith under the stress of persecution. There was danger that some of the Thessalonians might fall away (1 Thess. iii. 3; 2 Thess. i. 4). There was persecution at Corinth, in Ephesus, in Rome, in Galatia, and it was to be experienced by all who would live godly in Christ Jesus (Acts xiv. 22). It had been the rule in Paul's own career (2 Cor. xi. 24-27). He meets this danger with two considerations. First, believers are to *expect* persecution as part of the experience appointed unto them of God (Acts xiv. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 2-4; 2 Tim. iii. 12). And, second, they are to consider that suffering for Christ's sake leads to a happy resurrection, and brings glory, comfort, and rest at the Parousia (2 Thess. i. 7; 2 Cor. iv. 17; Rom. viii. 13; Phil. vi. 10).

A fifth danger to which some of Paul's converts were exposed was incipient *Gnosticism*,¹ although the Gnostic systems of thought did not arise in the apostolic age. There was a tendency in the church at Colossæ to go beyond the simple doctrines of the Gospel. Some laid claim to a higher wisdom than that of Christ (1 Cor. iv. 6; Col. ii. 3, 8-9). They seem to have placed other beings above Him — angelic thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers (Col. i. 14-20; ii. 10, 18). The fables, endless genealogies, profane babblings, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called, which are referred to in the Pastoral Epistles, seem to be akin to the Gnosticism of the second century, but they are alluded to in so general and indefinite a way that we cannot identify them with the speculations of any particular Gnostic sect.

To this incipient Gnosticism Paul replied, first, that Christ is the image of God, through whom the world was made, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead

¹ See Friedländer, *Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus*, p. 43 f.

dwelleth, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. i. 14-15; ii. 3, 9). Second, he teaches that the Christian life, instead of going beyond Christ, begins and ends in Him (Col. iii. 4, 17). He does not argue against the fables and endless genealogies, but warns against them as sure to have evil consequences of a practical sort, as envy and strife, railing and wrangling.

Another danger, especially manifest in the Corinthian church, was *exaggerated individualism*. The doctrine of Christian liberty was pushed to unlawful extremes. Women were violating what Paul regarded as the proper limits of their activity (1 Cor. xiv. 34). The Corinthian church was divided into rival factions, each of which put forward some person as its leader (1 Cor. i. 11-12). There was an improper exaltation of certain gifts, those which most readily contributed to self-glorification, and a corresponding contempt for others (1 Cor. xiii.-xiv.). Especially was there an ambition to shine in the matter of ecstatic speaking (1 Cor. xiv. 5-33), while the importance of love was largely forgotten.

To this tendency, variously manifested, Paul replied, first, that party-spirit and boasting in men is inconsistent in a believer since all things are his (1 Cor. iii. 9, 16, 21). Second, since all Christians alike are members of Christ, the work of each is sacred and important, and the exaltation of one over another is unreasonable (1 Cor. xii.). And, third, that there was something far more important than the vaunted spiritual gifts of the Corinthians, and that was love (1 Cor. xiii.). Speaking with tongues, prophesying, power to work miracles—these coveted gifts, though good, are of little value in comparison with love (1 Cor. xiv. 5; xii. 4, 28).

It is important to notice how, in meeting these various

dangers to which the Christian life was exposed, the apostle put in the foreground the vital relation that subsists between the believer and Christ. The perfect ethics of Christian living is involved in this fundamental fact.

From this survey of the dangers which threatened the new life we pass now to Paul's teaching in regard to that evil agency which, in his thought, was more or less connected with all these dangers, as with every sort of temptation. What Paul has to say of Satan and other evil spirits is wholly practical, and mainly incidental to the Christian's growth in grace. Therefore his references to the subject belong to his general teaching on the new life.

First, there is, according to Paul, a personal spirit called devil, Satan, and Belial, who is preëminently the evil one (Eph. vi. 16), the opponent of Christ (2 Cor. vi. 15), especially gifted with ability to deceive (*e. g.* 1 Thess. iii. 5), and who wields great power as the prince of the air and the god of this age (Eph. ii. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 4). The devil is a spirit (*πνεῦμα*), and so is thought of as able to work upon the spirit of man. He works in all the sons of disobedience, and blinds the minds of the unbelieving (2 Cor. iv. 4). There is no clear indication that Paul thought of Satan as a merely impersonal principle or tendency. He appears rather to have shared the ordinary Jewish view on the subject; and, according to this, Satan is concrete and personal.

Satan is regarded as utterly bad, a hunter who lays snares for souls (1 Tim. iii. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 26), a warrior who shoots burning darts (Eph. vi. 16), a serpent who beguiled Eve and is liable to beguile any of her descendants (2 Cor. xi. 3), a tempter full of devices to destroy

the work of God (1 Thess. iii. 5; 2 Cor. ii. 10-11). It is manifest that Paul thought of Satan as possessing vast power, since he calls him a prince and a god. He is prince of the power of the air (Eph. ii. 2); head over all evil spiritual existences, whose dwelling-place, according to the common conception of the rabbis, is the region just above the earth.¹ The greatness of his princeliness is seen in the fact that there are under him seducing spirits, principalities, powers, and world-rulers (1 Tim. iv. 1; Eph. vi. 11-12; 1 Cor. xv. 24). We have here a suggestion of grades of evil spirits, as Paul seems to have divided good spirits also into different ranks, in common with Jewish teachers of his time (Eph. iii. 10; Rom. viii. 38-39; Col. i. 16). But Paul has little to say of angels, whether good or bad. He may borrow the terminology of the false teachers in Colossæ, when he speaks of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" (Col. i. 16),² though he elsewhere mentions "powers" and "principalities" as though they were spiritual beings subordinate to Satan (Eph. vi. 11-12), that is, evil angels. Therefore one hesitates to say that Paul regarded angels as "poor, weak creatures," unable to influence those who belong to Christ, and that his relation to angels was like a Protestant's relation to ecclesiastical saints.³

Returning to the subject under discussion, we notice that Satan, as regards the manifestation of his power, is called the god of this age. His power controls the minds of the unbelieving and the sons of disobedience.

¹ See Everling, *Die Paulinische Angelologie und Daemonologie*; Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, i. 419.

² Comp. Abbott, *Ephesians and Colossians*, p. 33.

³ Comp. Everling, *Angelologie*, etc., p. 125.

It is illustrative of Paul's conception that he speaks of excommunication from the Church as a delivering over to Satan (1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20): that is, the realm of Satan extends up to the door of Christ's kingdom.

It is not surprising that such a prince should be able to work signs and wonders (2 Thess. ii. 9), to fashion himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 14), to tempt and to turn away disciples from the truth (1 Cor. vii. 5; 1 Tim. v. 15). This Satan is one between whom and Christ there is naught but conflict (2 Cor. vi. 15). His agents oppose the disciples of the Lord (*e.g.* 1 Thess. ii. 18; iii. 5). His spirits fabricate false doctrines to work against the faith, and they may present these as the pure doctrine of Christ (1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 14-15). Thus the Jewish theology taught that no one sins until the spirit of delusion, that is, Satan, enters into him.¹

The prince of the air seeks by wiles and force to destroy the work of Christ. His line of approach to man is the ethical rather than the physical. Thus a state of despondency or overmuch sorrow may open a door to him (2 Cor. ii. 11). By giving way to passion one plays into the hand of the devil (Eph. iv. 27). One who yields to pride falls into his snare (1 Tim. iii. 6-7). The devil is ready to use the desires of the flesh also. Paul cautions the married Corinthians against sexual asceticism on the ground that Satan might thereby tempt them (1 Cor. vii. 5). The destruction of the flesh of that member of the church at Corinth who had committed fornication may be understood as a destruction brought about by Satan, working through the sensuality of the man (1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20).

Paul teaches that Satan first blinds those whom he

¹ Comp. Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 228.

destroys. All unbelief is traced back to a blindness which is due to his coöperation (2 Cor. iv. 4). And yet, though his influence is to blind, he appears as a very angel of light (Eph. vi. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 14). His apostles are known among the Corinthians as apostles of Christ (2 Cor. xi. 15). By his power Satan is able to obstruct, at times, the path of Christ's servants. Thus he hindered Paul from returning, as he wished, to Thessalonica (1 Thess. ii. 18).

In some instances, Paul seems to attribute physical suffering to Satan. Thus his thorn in the flesh is called an angel of Satan (2 Cor. xii. 7), but this was overruled for his good. And so all the assaults of Satan, of whatsoever sort, are overcome by the Christian who is equipped with the whole armor of God (Eph. vi. 11-16). God triumphed over all evil powers in the cross (Col. ii. 15), and He must therefore be able to guard effectually all who follow the crucified Saviour. Christ has not yet fully abolished hostile rule and authority, nor will He have done so until the Parousia (1 Cor. xv. 24). Then the long conflict will end forever, all enemies having been put under Christ; and in this final and glorious victory all believers in Christ will share (1 Cor. xv. 25; Rom. xvi. 20).

CHAPTER VI

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE NEW LIFE

FROM the inward state we pass in this chapter to the outward manifestation. The Christian is to grow up into Christ in all things, but this is only one side of his divinely appointed activity. There is to be an expression of the Christ-life toward God, who is the source of it, and toward man who needs it. And this is one of the great themes of Paul's teaching, for it is immediately and constantly practical. Of the expressions of the new life with which Paul has to do, those toward God should be considered first, for they are first in experience; and of these expressions we will first consider *faith*. It has already been shown that faith is the sole condition of entrance into the new life in Christ. In the present paragraph we have to do with faith as a fundamental manifestation of that new life.

And first, it is to be observed that faith is the distinctive characteristic of the Christian. It is this which marks him off from other men, this which constitutes him what he is. Hence Christians are spoken of as those who *believe*, without mentioning the content of their belief (1 Thess. ii. 10, 13; 2 Thess. i. 10; Rom. x. 10; 1 Cor. i. 21; Eph. i. 19, etc. They are those who are *of* the faith, who *follow* the

Introductory.

(1) Of faith.

(a) Distinctive mark of Christian.

faith, who *keep* the faith (Gal. iii. 7; 1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 7). The apostle uses this term, "the faith," without definition as denoting the well-known character of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Christians are a household of faith, their walk is by faith, they stand by faith, they fight the fight of the faith, and the end of their faith is eternal life (Gal. vi. 10; 2 Cor. v. 7; Rom. xi. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 12; Phil. i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 16). As they all have one Lord, so all alike are characterized by one faith (Eph. iv. 5). A radical peculiarity of the Christian is that he *holds* the faith.

The specific *object* of Christian faith is the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith goes *toward* and *unto* Him, it rests *in* Him, it leans *upon* Him.¹ He is its object. (b) Object of faith. The few deviations from this usage are in general expressions and in Old Testament language (1 Thess. i. 8; Gal. iii. 6). Where belief and believing are used absolutely, the object to be understood is Christ. Once Paul mentions his own testimony as the object of faith (2 Thess. i. 10), but his testimony began and ended with Christ crucified (1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 1). Once he speaks of the mystery of the faith, where the object of faith is the Gospel mystery, but the mystery of the Gospel is Christ (1 Tim. iii. 9; Col. i. 27). Hence in these passages, as also in those in which belief and believing are accompanied by no object whatever, the object to be understood is Jesus Christ.

Paul's conception of faith in Christ, as we have seen in a previous paragraph, is accepting Him as Saviour and Lord. Therefore Paul speaks of faith as something that had been "revealed" in

¹ *ἐπί* and *εἰς* with the accusative, *ἐν* with the dative, and *ἐπί* with the dative.

the coming of Christ (Gal. iii. 23). True, men had been saved by faith since the beginning of the world (Gal. iii. 6; Rom. iv. 2-8), but not until Christ came was faith manifested in all its significance as the perfect law of life. Faith as the acceptance of Christ in His claim is an intensely practical conception. Accordingly we find that in his teaching on faith as an element in the new life the apostle emphasizes its ethical value. Thus true faith purifies the heart and abounds in good works. It is the ground of love (Gal. v. 6). Love is greater as regards man's relation to man (1 Cor. xiii. 13), but love owes its very existence to faith. Faith is the root, love the blossom. Hence Paul always, excepting 1 Tim. iv. 12, mentions faith before love in enumerating the elements of Christian character (1 Tim. i. 14; ii. 15; vi. 11; 2 Tim. i. 13; ii. 22; iii. 10; Tit. ii. 2; 1 Thess. i. 3; v. 8; Eph. iii. 17). By faith the soul not only passes through an experience analogous to the death of Christ, but it also enters into fellowship with the risen Christ, who lives now a life wholly unto God, no longer subject to the law of death (Rom. vi. 4-11). By faith we are joined to Christ in order that we may bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. vii. 4). By faith Christ dwells in the heart, and love is inspired by Him (Eph. iii. 17-19). Thus faith is, on the human side, the parent of all holiness. This is Paul's deepest thought as to the relation of faith to holy living, and this was born out of his own experience. The words recorded by Luke (Acts xxvi. 18), as spoken by the risen Lord to Paul, bear therefore the internal stamp of genuineness. They refer to the Gentiles as sanctified "by faith in Christ," and this is the teaching of the authentic Epistles. The apostle does not always go

back to this mystical ground of the ethical value of faith. He frequently refers to the moral manifestation of faith without especially pointing to the underlying necessity of such manifestation in the very nature of genuine faith. One of the things lacking to the faith of the Thessalonians was the proof of faith in purity of life (1 Thess. iii. 10; iv. 1-8). Their faith was imperfect in so far as their lives were unsanctified. Again, faith with love is the breastplate, and faith is the shield for resisting the assault of temptation, and so maintaining oneself in righteousness (1 Thess. v. 8; Eph. vi. 16). Here it is presented under the figure of defensive armor; elsewhere it is represented as an aggressive principle (1 Tim. vi. 12). In the Pastoral Epistles particular stress is laid on the point that faith should be accompanied by a good conscience. Men were making shipwreck of the faith by thrusting away a good conscience, *i.e.* by unholy living (1 Tim. i. 19). It is to be noticed that faith did not survive after a good conscience was thrust away. Again, the deacons were exhorted to hold the faith in a pure conscience (1 Tim. iii. 9), and neglect of one's family was accounted a denial of the faith (1 Tim. v. 8). A love of money turns one away from the faith (1 Tim. vi. 10). It is implied in this that true faith will stamp out covetousness. The apostle desires that those who have faith in God, having turned from their idols, should be careful to practise good works, a general expression covering holiness of life and the services of Christian love (Titus iii. 8). All this teaching is implied in Paul's conception of faith as a receiving of Christ Jesus into the heart.

Another phase of the ethical side of faith is that it must have a love of the truth, and must practise the

truth. It must live according to the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in Christ. It must be enlightened. The unbeliever is one whose mind is blinded as regards Christ (2 Cor. iv. 4), while the believer beholds the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 18). In the church at Rome were some whose faith was "weak" (Rom. xiv. 1). They had scruples about eating meat and drinking wine; and they observed days. They had faith in Christ, but it was weak on the side of spiritual apprehension. On the other hand, the faith of those who, like Paul, accounted nothing unclean in itself is called "strong" (Rom. xv. 1). This spiritual discernment which belongs to faith Paul calls "knowledge" in the Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. viii. 11). Nothing could show more plainly that faith, in his thought, naturally implies spiritual understanding, and is inconsistent with ignorance of spiritual things. The "measure of faith" mentioned in Rom. xii. 3 may best be explained as meaning that spiritual discernment which belongs to right faith. Each man in his thought of himself and of his work is to be limited by this understanding. It is in line with this when Paul says that some had erred concerning the faith through a cultivation of profane babblings and false knowledge (1 Tim. vi. 21). One who was sound in the faith would not give heed to Jewish fables and the communications of men who turn aside from the truth (Tit. i. 13-14). Such an one would nourish himself in the words of the faith (1 Tim. iv. 6), hold the pattern of sound words (2 Tim. i. 13), and abide in the sacred writings (2 Tim. iii. 15), not going beyond the things written (1 Cor. iv. 6). It is significant as showing the ethical side of faith in Paul's teaching, that he uses the very word *faith* where the

thought is plainly loyalty to Christ in *conduct*, and *fidelity* to those who have claims upon us (2 Thess. i. 4; Eph. i. 15; Philemon 5). Thus the details of Paul's teaching fully confirm the correctness of the general conception that faith means with him receiving Christ Jesus into the heart. It therefore necessarily involves christlikeness of character and christlikeness of life. Not even James more strongly emphasizes the ethical element of right faith than does Paul. Indeed, it cannot be more strongly emphasized than it is in the conception of faith as a reception of Christ into heart and life.

It follows from this fundamental conception of faith which Paul held, that the believer is perfectly certain regarding the great objects of his belief. He believes, *knowing* (2 Cor. iv. 13-14; Rom. vi. 8-9; v. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 58). There is an inner conviction regarding the content of his faith which nothing can shake. To walk by faith was not, for the apostle, to walk by uncertainties, but to walk by certainties. He knew that Christ dwelt in him; he knew that he should be raised up with Jesus; he knew that he had a building from God (Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. iv. 14; v. 1). He knew that his Christian hope would not be put to shame, because the love of God had been shed abroad in his heart (Rom. v. 3-5). In Christ Jesus the Christian has boldness and confidence through faith (Eph. iii. 12). He *knows* Him whom he has believed (2 Tim. i. 12), and therefore his faith has a rock basis. Faith receives Christ, and so brings certainty to the soul. But this does not exclude the *growth* of faith. Christ has not a perfect rule in us, and during all the earthly life we are ever approaching the ideal identification with Him (Eph. iv. 13-15). Paul expects that right faith will

grow. He gives thanks for the growth of the Thessalonians' faith (2 Thess. i. 3); he anticipates that the faith of the Corinthians will grow (2 Cor. x. 15). Even his Philippians are to progress in the faith (Phil. i. 25), and he repeatedly exhorts Timothy to follow after faith (1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22, iii. 10). He thought of growth in faith as being variously furthered, as by Christian counsel, by Christian example, and apparently by persecution patiently endured (1 Thess. iii. 2, 10; Rom. i. 12; Phil. i. 25; 1 Tim. iv. 12; 2 Tim. iii. 10; 2 Thess. i. 3-4).

Once only does Paul speak of a faith that is given to particular individuals (1 Cor. xii. 9-10). This faith ^{(e) Special gifts of faith.} must be understood in the light of what it accomplishes. One who possessed it had power to heal; another, power to work miracles; another by virtue of it prophesied, and yet another could discern spirits. These all were functions of those persons who possessed this gift of faith. The two latter point to the intellectual side of faith, the two former to its dynamic side. This faith is not to be regarded as something essentially different from the Christian faith in general. All Christian faith has power, and all Christian faith has spiritual apprehension. The faith given to certain members of the Corinthian church differed from the faith of others not in kind but in degree. It was a great heroic faith.

A second manifestation of the new life toward God is *hope*. That the full realization of salvation and the ^{(a) Of hope.} consummation of the kingdom of God belonged to the heavenly life was plainly taught by Jesus, and the disciples according to their insight into His teaching, and their sympathy with His spirit, shared

this view. They labored for the extension of the kingdom on earth with a fond hope of inheriting the kingdom in heaven.

The doctrine of hope found in Paul's writings is in keeping with what we know of him, and of his conceptions of salvation through Christ. He rejoiced in work for his Lord, but more, if possible, in the prospect of being "at home" with the Lord, when the redemption of the body would be complete, and the longing of the soul be satisfied. Hope is, therefore, one of the fundamental qualities or manifestations of the new life; and this appears not simply in the Epistles to the Thesalonians, but in all the Epistles. A fundamental quality of the *new* life, we say, because Paul teaches that those who are without this life are also without hope (1 Thess. iv. 13; Eph. ii. 12). To be separate from Christ is to be without hope of the kingdom which He has made known.

The importance of hope in Paul's system is manifested especially in the three following ways. First, he associates it with faith and love (1 Thess. v. 8; i. 3; 1 Cor. xiii. 13). The work and labor and patience, which are the outcome of these three qualities, make up a life for which he gives thanks to God, and which he holds in unceasing remembrance. These are the fundamental things which abide. Second, the importance of hope appears in this, that it is sometimes presented as the sum of the Christian religion. It is hoping in Christ which the apostle brings forward as the distinctive mark of those who are to be to the praise of God's glory (Eph. 1. 12). Hope in Christ marks the believer, as hopelessness marks the unbeliever. Again, it stands for the Christian

religion, as of central importance, in the passage, "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable" (1 Cor. xv. 19). Once the apostle coördinates it with faith, the two elements being mentioned as essential to a satisfactory presentation before God in the future life (Col. i. 23), and twice it is coördinated with godliness (Tit. i. 1-2; ii. 12-13). The truth which Paul claims as his norm is truth which is according to godliness, that is, which expresses itself in righteousness; and it is truth which is in hope of eternal life, or which *consists* in such hope. The sum of the instruction brought by the grace of God is that we should live soberly and wait for the blessed hope (1 Thess. i. 10). To be heirs according to the hope of eternal life, or to be heirs full of the hope of eternal life, characterizes the state which God had in view when He manifested His love toward man in Christ (Tit. iii. 4-7).

Third, the importance of hope in Paul's thought appears in this, that we are saved by way of hope. The end can be received in advance only as the object of hope. The redemption of the body is not yet accomplished; it is hoped for (Rom. viii. 23). Righteousness in its full meaning is something that we wait for during all the earthly life (Gal. v. 5). Such being the importance of hope in Paul's mind, it was natural that he should pray that Christians might abound in it by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. xv. 13).

The source of hope was for Paul the indwelling Christ (Col. i. 27). He declares that Christ is the hope of glory, even as He is the believer's life and the believer's peace (Col. iii. 4; Eph. ii. 14). In the same absolute sense in which God is called our Saviour, Christ is our hope (1 Tim. i. 1). The

(b) Source
and nature
of hope.

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iv. 24). When Paul speaks of hope as terminating in Christ (1 Cor. xv. 19; Eph. i. 12), his word is not "toward" or "upon" but "in." This is consonant with his view of the vital relation of the soul to Christ. It dwells in Him and He in it.

Hope is regarded by the apostle as the parent of several virtues and blessings. Thus patience, the quiet

(c) Relation of hope to other qualities of character. remaining under the burdens of life, is as closely associated with hope as work is with faith (1 Thess. i. 3). The patience of hope is the patience that springs from hope, that belongs to it, is its child. Again, it is because of his hope in the living God, the Saviour, that he has a constant willingness to toil and agonize (1 Tim. iv. 10). The most wearing and painful effort finds perpetual incentive in this hope. And it is also a spring of joy. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. v. 2), or according to the better text, we are exhorted to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. This is parallel to the word of the twelfth chapter of the same Epistle, which associates the duty of rejoicing in hope with the duty of serving the Lord and being patient in tribulation (Rom. xii. 11). The context of the former passage shows that the hope of glory is that possession which is the ground of joy. The exhortation is not that we should rejoice hoping, but that we should rejoice because we *can* hope, and because we *have* such a hope. The meaning of the other passage may best be understood in the light of this. And, finally, the blessing of safety in the midst of the dangers of life is attributed by Paul in part to hope. This is the helmet, as faith and love are the breastplate. Together they form the defensive equipment of the Christian soldier.

A third manifestation of the new life toward God is *thanksgiving*. The doctrine of thankfulness, as set forth in words, belongs almost entirely to the Prison Epistles, but we have substantially the same doctrine in the *example* of Paul, illustrated in all the earlier Epistles and the Acts. Thanksgiving has been called the "signature" of the New Testament time, and with Paul it is certainly one of the primary manifestations of the new life. It is a Christian duty. It is part of the will of God concerning us, which has been made known in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. v. 18). It is parallel with praying and rejoicing. Hence the lack of gratitude Paul regards as one of the cardinal sins, one of the first, and one which, as it were, prepared the way for all other sins (Rom. i. 21). And hence, also, in his description of the grievous times which, near the close of his life, he saw coming upon the churches, he mentions in the midst of the sins of pride, unholiness and hypocrisy, that of unthankfulness (2 Tim. iii. 2). God's will as manifested in Christ calls for thanksgiving. Giving thanks to God is part of the careful walk of the wise man (Eph. v. 20); it is an essential element in Christian prayer (Phil. iv. 6; Col. iv. 2; 1 Cor. xiv. 16-17; 1 Tim. ii. 1); together with fruit-bearing and patient endurance, it is a part of that walk which is worthy of the Lord and pleasing unto Him (Col. i. 12); and it accompanies the being established in faith (Col. ii. 7). Thankfulness is associated as a duty with the cherishing of the peace of Christ and the word of Christ (Col. iii. 15). It is to accompany all the speaking and doing of life (Col. iii. 17). The example of Paul involves the same teaching. He felt himself *bound* to give

(3) Of
thanks-
giving.

(a) Place
in Paul's
teaching.

thanks always for his converts' growth in faith, and their abounding in love (2 Thess. i. 3; ii. 13). The expression of gratitude toward God is generally one of the first promptings of his heart when he writes his letters (1 Thess. i. 2-3; 1 Cor. i. 4; Rom. i. 8, etc.).

Again, Paul teaches that the duty of thankfulness is binding even in the midst of troubles and distresses.

(*β*) Thanks-giving in distress. It is always in force. Alike his example and his word contain this doctrine. On the voyage to Rome, in the hour when all seemed to be lost, Paul took bread and gave thanks to God (Acts xxvii. 35). It was while a prisoner in Rome that he wrote most frequently of thanksgiving. He could rejoice in tribulations and take pleasure in distresses (Rom. v. 3; 2 Cor. xii. 10). And his precept accords with his example. Thus the Thessalonians are to give thanks in everything, that is, in every state, whether adverse or favorable (1 Thess. v. 18). So the Ephesians and Philippians (Eph. v. 20; Phil. iv. 6). It is taken for granted that there is always something for which the Christian should give thanks, and that he sees or should see this. There are great and permanent grounds for thanksgiving to which Paul refers, as the unspeakable gift of Christ, and the certainty of the final victory over all ills through Him (2 Cor. ix. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 57). Nothing can rob the Christian of the comfort of these facts; nothing should hinder the expression of his gratitude for them. Whatever the experiences of the Christian life — and Paul knew well how bitter these might be — it is still a life with infinite ground of gratitude.

This thanksgiving which should characterize the Christian life, is to be in the name, *i.e.* in the spirit, of Christ, or, it is to be through Him (Rom. i. 8; viii. 34;

vii. 25; Col. iii. 17; Eph. v. 20). God is always the recipient of the thanksgiving, with the exception of a single passage, 1 Tim. i. 2. Paul's conception of rendering thanks unto God "through" Christ is not clear. It may perhaps be taken in connection with his thought of Christ as making intercession for us (Rom. viii. 34. Comp. Rom. v. 10). For this presents Christ as in some sense a mediator even in heaven (1 Tim. ii. 5), a conception not elsewhere plainly found in Paul, though common in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

A fourth manifestation of the new life, as toward God, is prayer.¹ The thought of Paul regarding this lies not so much in precepts as in his own example. There is little in his Epistles regarding the duty, form, objects, or value of prayer, but much practical illustration of prayer in his own life. He teaches first, that the new life should be *pervaded* by prayer. His example conveys this doctrine. That which the Lord said to Ananias concerning Paul while he was blind in Damascus, "Behold, he prayeth," is characteristic of his Christian life throughout (Acts ix. 11). He prayed with his churches as he went from one to another (Acts xiv. 23). When he was cut off from working, he prayed and sang hymns (Acts xvi. 25). He prayed with his converts on the beach at Miletus and Tyre (Acts xx. 36; xxi. 5). He prayed before healing Publius (Acts xxviii. 8). When absent from his converts, he prayed unceasingly for them (1 Thess. i. 2; iii. 10; v. 23; 2 Thess. i. 11; 2 Cor. xiii. 9; Rom. xv. 13; Eph. i. 16; Phil. i. 4; Col. i. 3; Philemon 4). Of Christians whom he himself had

(c) Recipient of thanksgiving.

(4) Of prayer.
(a) Place in the new life.

¹ Of prayer as a part of public worship, see chap. viii.

not led into the faith, as those at Colossæ, he made constant mention in prayer (Col. i. 3). He prayed always for his unbelieving countrymen (Rom. x. 1), and doubtless also for all men, since he enjoined this upon other Christians (1 Tim. ii. 1). Each of his letters has words of prayer in the address, and each concludes with a brief prayer. And with this example agrees his precept. He exhorts the Thessalonians to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. v. 17), the Romans and Colossians to continue in prayer (Rom. xii. 12; Col. iv. 2), the Ephesians to pray at all seasons (Eph. vi. 18), the Philippians to pray in regard to every matter (Phil. iv. 6), and he informs Timothy that it is his wish that Christians in every place should pray for all men (1 Tim. ii. 1, 8). Thus Paul teaches that the Christian life should be full of prayer. His own example showed that abounding in prayer did not interfere with abounding in labors also. The fact that he frequently and urgently exhorts his converts to unceasing prayer implies that they will need to put forth effort to perform their duty in the matter.

Paul never seeks to prove, but always takes for granted that prayer may directly affect both our spiritual and material condition by way of God. He never by one word suggests that Christians need proof that (ð) Grounds and objects. God hears and answers prayer. He presents no theory or defence of prayer. He touches upon it as a plain duty, an activity of the Christian life that was unquestioned and unquestionable. He prays for spiritual blessings, as wisdom and knowledge, love and faith, peace and joy, strength and comfort, — in short, whatever seemed necessary to holy character and life. But he also prays for certain conditions regarding material things. He asked that he might

be permitted to see his Thessalonian converts (1 Thess. iii. 11-13; ii. 18), that he might be delivered from the disobedient in Judea (Rom. xv. 30), that utterance might be given him (Eph. vi. 19), that a door might be opened for the word (Col. iv. 3), that he might be delivered from prison in Rome (Philemon 22), and that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him (2 Cor. xii. 7-8).

In accord with the conception that thanksgiving is rendered to God *through* Jesus Christ, we find that prayer is habitually addressed, not to Jesus, but to God. It has already been noted that, with a single exception, thanksgiving is unto God, and that exception is in a Letter whose genuineness is doubted by many scholars. But whether it be held to be genuine or not, there can be no doubt what the practice of the apostle was in the matter of thanksgiving. Nor do the data leave us in uncertainty as to the one to whom Paul addressed his petitions as well as his thanksgivings. When speaking of his own practice, he says, writing to the Thessalonians, "We pray always for you, that our *God* may count you worthy of your calling" (2 Thess. i. 11). Accordingly, his prayer was habitually addressed to God. Likewise, in the general statement made to the Ephesians, he says, "I bow my knees unto the Father" (Eph. iii. 14). It is also assumed by the apostle that his readers address their petitions to God. He says to the Romans, "I beseech you . . . that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God" (Rom. xv. 30), and exhorts the Philippians to let their requests (*αἰτήματα*) be made known unto God (Phil. iv. 6). He never speaks thus of praying to Jesus. Yet when we turn to the *example* of Paul, we appear to have some exceptions to the rule that his petitions were

addressed to God. If we regard the benedictions as prayers, then it is most natural to take several of them as addressed to Christ (*e.g.* Rom. xvi. 20; Philemon 25; Gal. vi. 18). In the words of devout desire, which are found especially at the beginning of the Letters of Paul, the Lord Jesus is associated with God as the source of various blessings (*e.g.* 1 Cor. i. 3; Eph. vi. 23; 1 Thess. iii. 11). In the Epistles to the Thessalonians and in the second to Timothy there is language of prayer in which the word *Lord* is used; and though the reference of this word is ambiguous, it seems necessary to think, in some cases at least, that the apostle when using it had Jesus in mind (*e.g.* 1 Thess. iii. 12; 2 Thess. iii. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 8).

Such is the character, and such the extent, of the exceptions to the practice of Paul in addressing his prayers to God. When prayer is addressed to Jesus, it is, of course, to Jesus as Messiah, as mediator, as the one appointed by God unto the work of salvation, as the one representing the Father, who is the ultimate source and the final goal of redemption.¹

Prayer is to be in the Spirit like all the other activities of the Christian life. There is no sacredness attaching to it which should not also attach to all other (d) Prayer in the Spirit. duties. The Christian is to be led by the Spirit habitually, not occasionally (Rom. viii. 14); he is to be filled with the Spirit at all times, so that his songs and thanksgivings and all that he does shall be in the Spirit (Eph. v. 17-21). Hence it follows, logically, that prayer should be in the Spirit. Paul lays no stress upon this particular point. What he aims at is that life in its entirety should be lived in the Spirit. Praying in the

¹ Comp. Somerville, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, p. 142.

Spirit, and the Spirit praying in us (Rom. viii. 26), like the being in Christ and Christ being in us, are terms expressive of the closest intimacy between the Spirit of God and the human spirit, and of the perfect obedience of the human to the divine. But even though our prayers are in the Spirit, we may err in asking. We know not what we should pray for as our changing need requires (Rom. viii. 26). Even Paul asks for things which the Lord in His wisdom denies (2 Cor. xii. 8-9; Rom. xv. 30; i. 10; x. 1). This is incident to the limitation of our knowledge.

Paul assumes that true prayer is always answered, though the divine response may not be according to the *letter* of the prayer. It is already an answer, (*e*) Answers and an invariable one, that God sends His ^{to prayer.}

peace into that soul which commits its requests unto Him (Phil. iv. 6-7). This is not, of course, an answer in the narrower sense, but it is a divine response to prayer. The peace is not of our own creating, through any method of reasoning; it is from God. This answer Paul esteemed far more valuable, on one notable occasion, than an exact meeting of the letter of his petition would have been (2 Cor. xii. 8-9). In this particular case the answer of the deeper petition involved the denial of the more superficial one. Again, Paul prayed earnestly that he might be delivered from the disobedient in Judea (Rom. xv. 30); he prayed also that he might be allowed to go to Rome (Rom. i. 10). In the providence of God, the second petition was answered by the denial of the first. For the arrest of Paul in Jerusalem with the long subsequent imprisonment led to his being sent at last to Rome in a way that brought with it two years of well-nigh unimpeded work for the cause of Christ (Acts xxviii. 30-31).

Paul presents no doctrine touching the form, seasons, or attitude of prayer. He recognizes the habit of prayer at meals, which according to Jewish precedent would imply somewhat of fixity in the form (Rom. xiv. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 4; 1 Cor. xi. 24). As regards seasons, it has already been shown that Paul seeks to have the entire life pervaded by prayer. The stress is laid on this thought. Yet he also directs that prayer should form a part of the public worship, naturally on the first day of the week, for Gentile converts (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2).

As regards attitude, it appears incidentally that Paul's custom was to kneel (Acts xx. 36; xxi. 5; Eph. iii. 14). The ancient Hebrew custom of lifting the hands is once referred to by Paul as in existence among Christians. (1 Tim. ii. 8. Comp. Ps. xxviii. 2.)

It is manifest that Paul regarded these matters of form, season and attitude as of relatively little significance. He did not seek to secure uniformity. He left these things to be decided by the sense and taste of his converts. Only where there was danger that the public worship might be injured by a false personal liberty, as at Corinth (comp. chap. viii), did he give any precepts regarding the mode of prayer.

The fundamental manifestation of the new life as related both to God and man is *love*. This is the bond of perfectness, and the greatest of the trio of Christian virtues (Col. iii. 14; 1 Cor. xiii. 13). It is that element of character which is mentioned most frequently throughout Paul's Letters. He speaks sometimes of love in a general manner, leaving its object undefined. Thus Christian service is a labor of love (1 Thess. i. 3), the Christian's breastplate con-

(5) Of love.

(a) Its prominence.

sists of faith and love (1 Thess. v. 8); love is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22), and the end of the charge to men (1 Tim. i. 5); love builds up (1 Cor. viii. 1), love is to be without hypocrisy (Rom. xii. 9), love is to abound (Phil. i. 9), love is to bind men together (Col. ii. 2), aged men are to be sound in love (Tit. ii. 2); love is the element in which Christians are to walk (Eph. v. 1-2), and the Christian minister is exhorted to be an ensample in love (1 Tim. iv. 12). From the usage of the apostle elsewhere it must be inferred that love in these and similar passages is neither for God alone nor for men alone, but for both. Indeed, these objects of love cannot really be separated. Men are taught of God to love one another, but this divine tuition is nothing else than the divine love, which the responsive love of the human heart, and this alone, can understand and receive (1 Thess. iv. 9-10; Eph. iii. 17). The brotherhood of man is thought of as possible only in Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12-27; Gal. vi. 2). Love unlimited is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22), and itself presupposes the love of God (1 Cor. viii. 3). The love of Christ for us constrains us in action because of our regard for Him (2 Cor. v. 14). Christ is the norm of Christian love, which involves the truth that love manward has its motive in love Godward (Eph. v. 1-2; Rom. v. 8; xv. 1-7). So when Paul speaks of love without giving an object, it is love in the comprehensive sense of the word, including man, because it includes God.

God or Christ is, relatively speaking, seldom mentioned directly as the object of Christian love. ^(b) Love of Affection for God on the part of those whom ^{God.} He has redeemed seems to be taken for granted. And yet not entirely so. Paul's prayer for the Thessaloni-

ans is that their hearts may be directed into the love of God. Then will they obey the word of the Gospel and be strong to resist evil (2 Thess. iii. 3-5). As compared with the *knowledge* of the Corinthians, Paul declares that *love* is better. It secures an affectionate recognition from God, which mere knowledge cannot secure (1 Cor. viii. 2-3). And again, speaking to those Christians who unduly exalted intellectual gifts, the apostle affirms that lack of love for the Lord is worthy of an anathema (1 Cor. xvi. 22). The only other sin which Paul anathematized was the preaching of a corrupted Gospel (Gal. i. 8). But here also the root of the difficulty was that men did not glory in Christ as true love would have led them to do, but they gloried rather in their own works (Gal. vi. 13-14). Again, Paul makes the Christian's love for God the hinge on which everything turns for the soul's prosperity (Rom. viii. 28). If therefore he does not so often dwell on this love as on love for the brother man, the reason does not lie in an undervaluation of it. It is and remains supreme. It is the channel of grace (Eph. vi. 24), the condition of receiving the crown at last (2 Tim. iv. 8).

But in Paul's teaching the emphasis falls on *brotherly* love. It is to the cultivation of this that he most frequently exhorts. And his own example goes before his teaching. He was ready to give his life for the Thessalonians because they were so dear to him (1 Thess. ii. 8). He was in travail in behalf of his Galatians, his little children, till Christ should be formed in them (Gal. iv. 19). He was ready to be anathema from Christ for the sake of his kinsmen, the Israelites (Rom. ix. 3). He brought himself under bondage to all men (1 Cor. ix. 19). The brother's con-

science determined his outward life in things not essential (Rom. xiv. 15). He endured all hardships that he might lead some souls to Christ (2 Cor. xi. 23-27; Acts xx. 19, 24). What he exhorted others to be he himself was in an eminent sense — an ensample of love (1 Tim. iv. 12; 2 Tim. iii. 10). No elements of character save those which are most closely associated with love, *i.e.* faith and hope, have such constant and shining illustration in Paul's life as this. But his doctrine appears in his words as well as in his example. He prays that his converts may abound in love one toward another, and toward all men (1 Thess. iii. 12; Col. ii. 2; Phil. i. 9); he gives thanks for the evidences of brotherly love (2 Thess. i. 3; Col. i. 3-4); he exhorts to its exercise (1 Thess. iv. 9-10; Gal. v. 13, etc.); he instructs concerning its development and importance. This instruction is not usually specific, concerning brotherly love in particular, but it is rather of love in general. Here, as elsewhere, his statements are popular and practical.

He teaches, first, that it is of the nature of love to *serve*. Love builds up the structure of character toward the fulness of Christ (1 Cor. viii. 1). It is ^(d) Nature kind, and does kind things whenever it may ^{of love.} (1 Cor. xiii. 4). It is generous, and does not envy the prosperity of others. It helps also by bearing injury without retaliating, and by enduring irritating things without being provoked. It serves by cultivating humility, and conforming the character to the meekness and gentleness of Christ (2 Cor. x. 1; 1 Cor. xiii. 4-5). It rejoices with the truth, abhorring that which is evil even in one who is beloved, and cleaving to the good wherever found (Rom. xii. 9; 1 Cor. xiii. 6). It is its nature to help, because it is its nature to have confidence in man,

and while waiting the fruition of its hope it endures what causes pain (1 Cor. xiii. 7). It seeks the neighbor's good, and bears his burdens (1 Cor. viii. 13; Gal. vi. 2). It weeps with those who weep (Rom. xii. 15). It refreshes the heart by its kindly ministrations (Philemon 7). Willingness to serve is proof of the sincerity of love (2 Cor. viii. 8). Love helps the brother by regarding his conscience. It belongs to it not to grieve a brother man when nothing essential is at stake (Rom. xiv. 13-23; 1 Cor. viii. 13; x. 24). It surrenders its own pleasures rather than cause another to stumble. It is not unreasonable, but is rather bound to act in knowledge and discernment (Phil. i. 9).

The development of love is of God and also of man, as is the case with every virtue. Paul prays that the Lord may make his converts abound in love, but he also directly exhorts them to abound (1 Thess. iii. 12; iv. 9-10; Gal. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 8, etc). Men are taught of God to love one another (1 Thess. iv. 9-10). He is the God of love, its proper source (2 Cor. xiii. 11). By his gift of Christ, which signally manifested His love, men may learn love (Rom. v. 8; viii. 32). The divine source is also specifically affirmed when Paul calls love a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). But it is a fruit of the Spirit through man's effort, and in no other way (Phil. ii. 12-13). If it is a spiritual gift, it is also something to be followed after (1 Cor. xiv. 1).

The importance of brotherly love is magnified in Paul's teaching. He summarizes the whole law in one word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Gal. v. 14). This cannot be understood as meaning the whole law concerning man's duty, but the law concerning man's

(e) Great-
ness of
brotherly
love.

whole duty to man (Rom. xiii. 8-9). And this law he thought of as being the law of Christ no less than the law of the Old Testament (Gal. vi. 2), for the law that is fulfilled in bearing one another's burdens is none other than the law of love. The negative side of love Paul speaks of in Rom. xiii. 10, where he says that love is the fulfilment of the law, because it works no ill to the neighbor. Not doing ill is but the lesser side of love, as abundantly appears in Paul's writings. It is the fulfilment of the law as far as regards the doing harm to the neighbor, but love goes far beyond this. In Paul's poetic praise of love, the aspect of man to man is prominent, rather than that of man to God. Love is there exalted far above eloquence, even eloquence of angels; above the gift of prophecy, above knowledge and faith. In this last item the statement is highly rhetorical, for there cannot be true love apart from faith. Love, then, can be said to be greater than faith only in the sense that in man's relation to man it is the more prominent. Greater also than the surrender of all one's possessions, and the surrender of life itself, is love, for even life might be given up selfishly. It is greater than these because it gives itself according to the example of Christ (Gal. i. 4; Eph. v. 2). As regards the other elements of character, love is the bond which binds them together into perfect whole (Col. iii. 14).

In considering the manifestations of the new life as between man and man it is necessary to speak somewhat fully of the new life in the home. It is by no means to be assumed that we have in Paul's fragments referring to this subject a complete view of his teaching. Most of the Epistles do not touch it at all. The earlier writings

(6) The new life in the home.

and the chief doctrinal Letters have nothing upon the home.

Paul recognizes as the basis of the home the union of one man with one woman for life (Eph. v. 31; 2 Cor. vi. 16).

(a) Basis of the home. The permanence of the union is assumed. Paul simply goes back to the primitive institution in these points. The indissolubleness of the marriage relation is also implied in the comparison of it with Christ's relation to the Church (Eph. v. 22-23).¹ Paul could never have used this language if he had not been loyal to the meaning of the original divine institution.

The disputed texts, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 12; v. 9, may best be explained in line with the primitive ordinance. The bishop, the deacon, and the widow who wishes to receive aid from the Church must all, if married, have been in marital relation with one person at a time. They must have been blameless, the men in relation to women, and the woman in her relation to men. The passages can scarcely be regarded as forbidding literal polygamy, for this view would be inconsistent with the apostle's teaching (1 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. v. 22-23). Neither can they be regarded as directed against second marriages, for Paul explicitly sanctions these (1 Cor. vii. 8). It cannot be held that he sanctioned second marriage in some cases, but refused it in others. He recognized one rule of faith and conduct for all Christians. It is not probable that he would allow widows to remarry, and then, in the event of the death of the second husband, tell them that they could not be aided by the Church because they had married a second time, which very thing he had sanctioned. The meaning of the prohibi-

¹ Comp. Ernesti, *Die Ethik des Apostels Paulus*, p. 164.

tion seems to be that candidates for office in the Church and widows who would be enrolled among the beneficiaries of the Church, must be without reproach in regard to their marriage relations. The passages, therefore, are not aimed at polygamy or second marriage, but at unchastity.

While the marriage union is lasting as life, Paul allowed separation on religious grounds. If the believing party felt constrained to leave the unbelieving party, that act was tolerated. But the one who departed was not to remarry, that is, the wedded relation was not regarded as dissolved. And further, it is to be noticed that Paul discouraged separation even in cases where husband or wife was an unbeliever. It was better to live together in hope of winning the unbelieving member (1 Cor. vii. 16). These cases where Paul speaks of separation were cases where marriage occurred before either party was converted. He did not allow marriage between a believer and an unbeliever (2 Cor. vi. 14).

Paul makes no reference to the case of adultery; and there is no reason to suppose that his teaching in such a case differed from that of his Master.

The apostle was never opposed, in principle, to marriage.¹ On the contrary, he declared that those who were thus opposed and who taught that superior holiness was attainable through celibacy, had fallen from the faith (1 Tim. iv. 1-3). Yet, as a matter of simple expediency, he at one time regarded the unmarried state as preferable to the married (1 Cor. vii. 8-40). It was free from many cares and distractions, and thus more favorable to the work of the Lord. The present was

¹ Comp. Marcus Dods, *The Expositor*, i. 237; Pfeiderer, *Das Urchristenthum*, p. 61,

a time of distress; the Lord's coming was thought to be at hand, and therefore every interest might properly be subordinated to the immediate preaching of the Gospel. Hence, of course, this view of Paul is not one that can be held to be perpetually binding.

The relation of husband and wife is exalted by Paul, and glorified, when he compares it with the relation between Christ and the Church (Eph. v. 22-23).
 (b) Marriage glorified. He uses this comparison to enforce two points, presumably those which he regarded as fundamental in the relation of husbands and wives. First, the wife is to subject herself unto her husband (Eph. v. 22-24, 33). This subjection is limited by its comparison with the Church's relation to Christ. It is a subordination as regards authority (Comp. 1 Tim. ii. 12). There can be in it no slavish feeling since that would be inconsistent with the love that is enjoined. It is a willing subordination of love. The apostle elsewhere finds a ground for this subordination in the fact that Eve was created after Adam, and for him (1 Tim. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xi. 9). This statement that Eve was created for Adam, he immediately modifies, as though feeling that it was somewhat derogatory to woman. He admits that the man is not without the woman. If the woman was originally out of man, so is every man in the course of history by the woman; his existence is through her agency (1 Cor. xi. 11-12).

Second, the apostle uses the relation of Christ to the Church to enforce the duty of the husband to love his wife. The measure of his love for his wife is found in Christ's love for the Church (Eph. v. 25). As that was a love capable of the greatest sacrifices, so also should this be. And again, the husband should love his wife

as he loves his very self (Eph v. 28). If he does, he will nourish and cherish her. His authority will live and move and have its being in love.

On the relation of parents and children to each other the Letters of Paul rarely touch, and then without making any specific application of Christianity. That ^(c) Children which is most fundamental to this aspect of ^{and slaves.} the home is contained in the apostle's lofty conception of marriage. When this is realized and love prevails, the details regarding children can safely be left to Christian sense and experience.

But when we come to the slaves and their place in the household, it appears that Paul had occasion to speak of the specific bearing of Christianity on this institution. This was natural, for the contrast between the spirit of the Gospel and the spirit which was usually manifest in the treatment of slaves, not to say the spirit which tolerated the institution of slavery, was so striking that religious teachers were forced to take cognizance of it.

The utterances of Paul on this subject involve three fundamental points. First, the slave and his Christian master are brothers; second, the slave is to regard his service as service for the Lord Christ; and, third, the slave is to remember that by his slave-service he can adorn the doctrine of God in all things (Tit. ii. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 1). Since his service is unto the Lord, it is to be rendered heartily (Col. iii. 23), and is to be faithful (Eph. vi. 5-7; Col. iii. 22). The converted slave of an unbelieving master is to count such an one worthy of honor (1 Tim. vi. 1). Even if he can become free, he is rather to use his position as a slave, naturally for the sake of the Gospel (1 Cor. vii. 21).

To advise a slave who might be set free, to remain in his position as slave, is hardly the same as to pronounce slavery a matter of "indifference." Paul did not do this. But he had the wisdom to follow the example of his Master, and to look for the removal of slavery by the inward working of the power of Christianity. It was for Paul a matter of indifference only as compared with what the slave, as a slave, might do for Christ.

The masters, on the other hand, are commanded to have good-will toward their slaves, to forbear threatening, and to render unto them what is just and equal (Eph. vi. 9; Col. iv. 1). Accountability to their own Master in heaven is to control them in the exercise of their mastership on earth. An illustration of the temper required in the master toward his servant is found in Paul's words to Philemon concerning the slave Onesimus, "receive him as myself" (Philemon 17). It is plain that so far as this teaching is carried out, the evils of slavery must fall away, yea, the very institution itself, though this result may not have been present to Paul's thought.

We pass now from the home to the State. The Christ-life itself is of course the same in principle here as there, and the only point to be considered in this place is Paul's thought on the Christian's *relation* to the State, as far as that can be gathered from the scant data. The Christian's commonwealth is in heaven, a theocracy where God is all in all (Phil. iii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 28). His relation to the earthly State therefore is but an incident in his career.

(7) The Christian's relation to the State.

Paul teaches that civil government as such is ordained of God, and that the particular existing governments

are of divine institution (Rom. xiii. 1). The particular government with whose working Paul was most familiar was the Roman monarchy. His statement, (a) A divine however, is general. But Paul did not regard ordinance. the existing governments as *wholly* divine ordinances. This is manifest from his statement that earthly rulers crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. ii. 8); manifest also in the possible reference to Nero as a ravenous beast (2 Tim. iv. 17). If, moreover, Paul had regarded civil government as an *entirely* divine institution, he would have been inexcusable for escaping from Aretas when the governor sought to lay hold on him (2 Cor. xi. 32-33). That an existing government might be anti-Christian in character is illustrated by Paul's experience at Philippi, where God reversed the action of the city government (Acts xvi. 19-40). Paul refers to the treatment that he received from the authorities in Philippi as shameful (1 Thess. ii. 2).

In declaring that the powers that be are ordained of God, Paul lays down a general principle which he later justifies. Government, he says, is a divine ordinance because it rewards the good and punishes the evil (Rom. xiii. 3). It is a divine ordinance in that it restrains lawlessness (2 Thess. ii. 6-7). The Roman government professed to do this, and it did it in a large measure. By virtue of Roman law, Paul was delivered from the Jews in Jerusalem and Cæsarea, and from the authorities in Philippi; by virtue of Roman law the great riot was quelled in Ephesus, to the advantage of Christianity; and by virtue of it Paul was delivered from the Jews in Corinth (Acts xxi. 32; xxv. 9-10; xix. 23-41; xviii. 12-17).

Since government is a divine ordinance, and in so far as it is a divine ordinance, obedience is to be ren-

dered as a religious duty (Rom. xiii. 5). Hence Paul commands Titus to inculcate subjection to rulers in the minds of the Cretan believers (Tit. iii. 1). Yet there is a limit to the obedience which is to be rendered to government, and that is conscience toward God (Rom. xiii. 1, 5; 1 Thess. iii. 3-10; 2 Thess. i. 6-10). The Christian must be loyal to Christ even though persecuted and martyred (2 Tim. iv. 6; 2 Thess. i. 4, etc.). When conscience toward God forbids obedience to human laws, the Christian's part, as a rule, is not to resist or to take vengeance, but to suffer, unless indeed God plainly intervenes for deliverance (1 Thess. iii. 3-10; Acts xvi. 19-40). At times it may be the Christian's duty to flee from the persecutor (Acts xxiii. 16-21; 2 Cor. xi. 32-33; Acts xiii. 50-51). But whether he should flee or suffer quietly, is left, as far as Paul's writings go, to the direction of the Lord at the particular crisis. It appears from this privilege of flight that Paul does not lay down the duty of non-resistance as absolute. Flight itself is a sort of resistance. Further, Paul himself resisted official action at Philippi and at Cæsarea (Acts xvi. 35-39; xxv. 12). In one case the officers had violated their own law, and in the other the apostle had the legal right of appeal. Yet non-resistance to civil authority stands as a general principle. The converts to Christianity were not to throw off, or attempt to throw off, their subjection to the political rule, however far it might be from the Christian ideal. They were rather to manifest their faith in the various circumstances in which they found themselves (1 Cor. vii. 20). Their armor, both offensive and defensive, is not material, but spiritual (Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. vi. 11-13).

(b) Obedience and conscience.

CHAPTER VII

GOD'S PURPOSE IN CHRIST FOR THE RACE

IN contrast with the narrow dogma of Pharisaic theology, Paul teaches that God is God of all men, rich unto all who call upon Him, as ready to justify Gentiles who do the unwritten law of the heart as He is to justify Jews who keep the written law (Rom. iii. 29; x. 12; ii. 12-16). All men have exactly the same need of salvation, and God's purpose in Christ is a purpose of grace for all the needy without distinction. The apostle, unlike the Jewish theology of his time,¹ found this Catholic teaching in the Old Testament. In the promise that was made to Abraham he recognized an outlook upon unrestricted grace (Rom. iv. 17; Gal. iii. 8). In the rabbinical theology, the Gentile world is excluded from God's plan, and absolutely deserted by Him. In the thought of Paul, the Gospel was preached to Abraham. Universal salvation was promised, and it was to be appropriated by faith. This is the twofold thought of Paul's most doctrinal Epistle, and constitutes what he calls *his* Gospel (Rom. i. 16-17; ii. 16). Not only in the Old Testament but also in his own commission did Paul find proof of the truth that God's purpose of grace is universal in its sweep. He himself was sent to all the Gentiles without exception, and as far as

¹ Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 269.

strength and time permitted he went to the Gentiles, proclaiming to all alike a free salvation (Acts xxii. 21; Rom. xv. 19). In his letters to converts from heathenism, he says that Christ died for them, for them as heathen and lost in sin (1 Thess. v. 9; Gal. i. 4; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. viii. 32; Eph. ii. 4). Thus the teaching of God in Paul's own experience was in line with that purpose of universal grace which he found in the Old Testament.

But more than that. Paul's very conception of the character of God, and his deepest thought regarding Christ, involve, logically, the same universality. God is one, and therefore has one method of dealing with Jews and Gentiles (Rom. iii. 29-30). God is impartial in Himself, and hence judges all men according to the purpose of the heart (Rom. ii. 2-11). Presence or absence of any external condition does not enter at all into the account (Rom. ii. 12-16). God is also a God of love, even toward the ungodly (Rom. iv. 5). He gives the best He has for the sake of the worst of men. His goodness goes so far that He tries to lead to repentance even the carnally-minded Jews, who were practically despising His grace (Rom. ii. 4). And because He is love, He reveals Himself to all men (Rom. i. 19; Acts xvii. 25). For the same reason, He overlooked the ignorance and passed over the sins of all the generations before Christ (Rom. iii. 25; Acts xvii. 30). Because He is love, He wills that all men should be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4), and His providential government has constantly in view that men should seek Him (Acts xvii. 27). Again, Paul's fundamental thought of Christ as the last Adam brings Him into a relation to the entire race corresponding to that of the first Adam

(1 Cor. xv. 45). The universal dispensation of physical death through the first man is set over against the universal dispensation of spiritual life in Christ (Rom. v. 12-21). The comparison emphasizes universality. Christ stands at the head of a dispensation.¹ Therefore when He died for all, all died (2 Cor. v. 14). When He rose, it was as the first-born into a spiritual kingdom designed to include the entire race as far as they believed (Rom. viii. 29; v. 17).

Paul's teaching on an eternal choice of God is incidental, but is in perfect harmony with his idea of universal grace. God's eternal choice is, according to the apostle, an eternal expression of His love toward those who will be impressed by that love. It is the response of His love to a foreseen acceptance of His grace. This foreknowledge of God Paul refers to directly but twice: once in regard to individuals, and once in regard to Israel (Rom. viii. 29; xi. 2). In the first of these passages he makes it plain what idea he connects with the term. Those whom God foreknew, He foreordained to become conformed to the image of His Son. Now Paul in all his teaching speaks of but one condition of being conformed to the image of Christ, and that is faith.² Hence Paul's completion of the thought in the expression, "Those whom He foreknew," would be, "Those whom He foreknew as ones who would accept His grace in Christ." God's foreknowledge of Israel, referred to in the same epistle, is to be understood in the same way. He foresaw what the people would become, and He chose accordingly. This passage is not concerned with the eternal salva-

¹ Beyschlag, *Christologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 225.

² Godet, *Biblical Studies*, New Testament, p. 273.

tion of Israel, but only with their choice to a historical mission.

Hence election, which Paul of course *always* thinks of as being according to knowledge, no less than in the two passages cited, is a fact which he employs to encourage his readers or to exalt the dignity of the Christian state (1 Thess. i. 4; Eph. i. 4; Rom. viii. 33; Col. iii. 12).¹ Since election is according to the foreknowledge of faith, it is independent of works. Paul has occasion to emphasize this thought because the Jews were relying on their works. Israel failed to obtain righteousness for this very reason; while the elect, because they accepted Christ in faith and renounced any merit of their own, attained unto righteousness (Rom. xi. 5-7; 1 Cor. i. 27). The Jews believed that they established a legal claim upon God by their works.

Paul declares that election is by grace. Whether election has in view Messianic privileges, as in the famous ninth chapter of Romans, or the salvation of the soul, it is independent of man's works. God's hands are not tied. For faith, in Paul's thought, is the very antithesis of works. It simply receives what grace bestows.

The eternal purpose of God, like His eternal choice, is an expression of love toward those who receive His (3) Eternal grace (Rom. viii. 28-30). It has special purpose. reference to the evolution and results of the Christian life. It concerns the actualization in time of the eternal gracious choice. Paul knows of but two grand objects of the eternal purpose of God, and these both concern the redemption of believers. He purposed that Christ should be for us, and also that we should be

¹ Comp. Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 362.

for Christ. This is for him the whole sphere of the divine purpose. The wisdom which God appointed in eternity unto our glory was the wisdom of Christ, was Christ Himself, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (1 Cor. ii. 7; Col. ii. 3). *He* is made unto us wisdom (1 Cor. i. 30). It is not an abstract but a personal wisdom which was determined upon by God to be unto our glory. So the good pleasure which was purposed in behalf of the recipients of grace was in Christ, consisted in Him, or was Christ (Eph. i. 6; iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9). It was given us in Christ before times eternal, that is, *Christ* was given to us before times eternal. This is one side of the eternal purpose or appointment of God. The other side is equally clear in Paul's thought. It is that the believer should be conformed unto the image of Christ (Rom. viii. 29). This is an eternal purpose of God. It is sometimes otherwise expressed, but the thought is the same. For example, we were appointed unto adoption as sons, the condition of sons of God being the end in view (Eph. i. 5). Or we were appointed to be unto the praise of God's glory, which is accomplished only through likeness to Christ (Eph. i. 12). This eternal purpose regarding the believer, that should be conformed unto the image of Christ, includes, of course, all things that are necessary to this end (Rom. viii. 28-30). Hence the eternal purpose of God is, according to Paul, a purposing of Christ unto us and of us unto Christ. Paul speaks of nothing else as included in the divine purpose. Of an eternal appointment unto destruction, he has absolutely no hint.¹ If it be logically involved in the idea of eternal choice unto salvation,²

¹ Comp. Pfeiderer, *Das Urchristentum*, p. 288.

² Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 358.

then it is equally involved in Paul's teaching that such appointment unto destruction is dependent on a foreseen unbelief, even as he plainly teaches that the object of foreknowledge as regards the righteous is their faith. This eternal purpose of God regarding men is assumed by Paul to include every soul. The Gospel is offered to all alike. But when the Gospel is offered and accepted, the acceptance being confirmed by a Christian life, then the apostle regards it as practically certain that those who have thus accepted the Gospel are elected (1 Thess. i. 4).

It cannot be said that Paul's conception of election is in conflict with his teaching on the sovereignty of God. For, while he teaches that God is sovereign, he does not teach that He is blind and arbitrary in His sovereignty. Even in the Jewish theology, God deals with the Gentiles, no less than with the Jews, strictly according to their works.¹ The idea of decrees, irrespective of man's belief or unbelief, is not found in the Jewish theology of the Pharisaic school,² neither is it found in Paul. God acts in a rational and loving manner even toward an Esau and a Pharaoh. Paul always sees "more in the circle of His divinity than sovereignty. There is justice, too; there is righteousness; there is holiness; there is graciousness, goodness, wisdom, mercy, love."³ God limits Himself in purposing to save those who believe. As the purpose of God is according to man's faith, so Paul knows of no absolute sovereignty, in the naked sense of the terms, in God's dealing with men. The idea⁴ that when God re-

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 70.

² Comp. Gfrörer, ii. 112, 125.

³ See Morison's *Commentary on Romans*, p. 197.

⁴ Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 358.

jected Esau and chose Jacob to be the channel of the Messianic blessing, He shut Esau out from eternal salvation, is without exegetical ground; and to hold that God took Esau and Pharaoh, entirely irrespective of their character, and gave them over to perdition, is to fall far below the plane of Paul's conception of God. The point at issue in the ninth chapter of Romans is not the choice of some unto salvation and the rejection of others, but the choice of some to be the channels of revelation and the rejection of others.¹ This is a point of vital importance, which, however, has sometimes been entirely overlooked by theologians.

Paul teaches that God is absolutely sovereign in this respect, viz., that man cannot by works establish any claim upon Him (Rom. ix. 15). And this is the sole point in which the apostle affirms the sovereignty of God. Descent from Abraham, he says, does not found a claim to Messianic privileges. So far are works from controlling God's action that he chose between Jacob and Esau before they were born. He gave the Messianic privilege and blessing to Jacob because He pleased. Jacob did not earn it. To object to this truth is, according to the apostle, absurd. It is just as absurd as it would be for a vessel to contend with the potter because he had made it of one sort rather than of another. The clay can do nothing to establish a legal claim upon the potter. It cannot demand, as its right, to be fitted for a place of honor in a king's palace. As little can the carping Jew establish a claim upon God by his works. God acts independently of works. As far as *these* are concerned, He moves on sovereignly in the

¹ Compare the admirable treatise of W. Beyschlag, *Die Paulinische Theodicee*, 1868.

bestowment of His blessings. God is a potter, and man is clay only so far as concerns man's historical appearance and use. The figure has nothing to do directly with eternal relations.

Corresponding to the sovereign bestowment of Messianic privilege is the fact that God hardens whom He will. Paul supports God's right to bestow privileges independently of works by His right to bestow judgment as He will. He hardened Pharaoh; later He hardened some of the Jews (Rom. ix. 17-18; xi. 7-10). Let Paul interpret Paul. God gave these persons over to moral degradation (Rom. i. 24, 26, 28). Whether He shall let judgment fall, and how far He shall let it fall, rests solely with Him. Letting judgment fall is "hardening" or blinding to the light (Rom. ix. 18; xi. 8). But instead of being arbitrary, this action, by its very nature, excludes arbitrariness. God proceeds here, it is true, independently in this sense that He sends or withholds judgment as He pleases. But this must be noticed: *when* he hardens, it is a rebellious Pharaoh or unbelieving Jews. It is those only who turn from Him and harden themselves. It is impossible for Him to harden a good man. He cannot let judgment fall on one who trusts in Him; but, if He will, He can withhold judgment from those who do *not* trust in Him. This is the independence, the sovereignty, that is contemplated. Hence the act of hardening is as reasonable as is that of justifying. And, further, this should be noted, that even those whom He does harden, He does not utterly desert. He bare with Pharaoh in much longsuffering (Rom. ix. 22). Before the unbelieving Jews, some of whom were hardened, He stood all the day long, that is, throughout their entire history, with hands outspread

in invitation (Rom. x. 21). Those whom He shut up unto disobedience, He shut up that He might ultimately have mercy upon them (Rom. xi. 32). Thus, in Paul's thought, even God's judgment of hardening is encompassed with love. It is not only a rational act, but it is also an act to which God proceeds only after many overtures of love and in a spirit of tenderness which would joyfully welcome any indication that man was turning from his stubborn and sinful opposition.

God's gracious purpose for the race was not made known to Jews and Gentiles alike. While it was distinctly contained in the promise to Abraham, (5) Revelation of God's purpose. it was not plainly made known to the Gentiles until the time of Paul (Gal. iii. 8; Rom. xvi. 25-26; Eph. iii. 6; ii. 12). The apostle does not inquire how far, if at all, the divine purpose of grace for the entire race benefited the Gentiles who lived before Christ. This was not a practical matter. However, we know that his conception of the Gentile world as a whole, a conception formed from his own observation, was that it had not life, was without God, and was sinking deeper and deeper in iniquity (Rom. i. 18-32; Eph. ii. 12; iv. 18). Yet he recognizes the possibility of the salvation of Gentiles by the light of God in nature and conscience (Rom. i. 21; ii. 14-15; 26-27). This was an advance upon the Jewish theology, according to which all the Gentiles who had not joined themselves to Israel would be given over to destruction.¹

God's purpose of grace, universal in its sweep, will be only partially accomplished either for Jew or Gentile. In Paul's day the major part of the Jews did not

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 76.

hearken to the glad tidings (Rom. x. 16, etc.) They stumbled at the stone of stumbling (Rom. ix. 32). Paul, after he had labored among them at intervals for many years, has hope of saving only a part of the whole people (Rom. xi. 14). His success among the Jews in Ephesus was exceptional; generally he was driven out of the synagogue as soon as his doctrine was fairly understood, having won few converts, or none at all (Acts xiii. 46; xiv. 5, 9; xvii. 5; xix. 8). His chief enemies were everywhere the unbelieving Jews. Still he looked for a better day. He taught that God's plan would have a glorious realization even among the Jews at some day in the future. Israel as a whole would yet be saved (Rom. xi. 12, 26). Not, of course, the Jews of all the ages, past, present, and future, but as the context plainly shows, the Jews of some unknown future period, after the fulness of the Gentiles should have come in. As of the Jews, so also of the Gentiles, only a part would accept the invitation of the Gospel. Some who had heard the word from Paul were perishing (2 Cor. ii. 15). The minds of some were blinded by the god of this world, so that the light of the Gospel could not dawn upon them (2 Cor. iv. 4). And so it would continue to be in the future.

The apostle foresaw grievous times of apostasy (2 Tim. iii. 1-13; Acts xx. 29-30). The worst manifestation of sin would immediately precede the Parousia. Yet, at the same time, he taught that the kingdom would be widely extended in a genuine way. The fulness of the Gentile world would sometime enter into it (Rom. xi. 25). The language is rhetorical, but it looks forward to triumphs of the Gospel which would at least surpass

(6) Accom-
plishment of
God's
purpose.

what Paul had seen. He well knew that only a handful out of the vast population of the Roman Empire had been won into the kingdom of Christ. This was indeed, as he says, a *reconciling* of the world (Rom. xi. 15), but that which should yet be accomplished would be as *life from the dead*,—a far more glorious success than that of Paul's day. Thus he thought of the purpose of God as destined to have a widening fulfilment.

Glimpses of a still grander realization of the divine plan of redemption in Christ are found in the later epistles of Paul. For he teaches that as all things were created unto Christ, so eventually all things shall be again brought into organic and harmonious relation to Him (Eph. i. 10, *ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι*). This "again" can refer only to that divine ideal of Christ's relation to the universe which existed in the mind of God, for from the beginning of history the organic relation to Christ has been variously marred and destroyed. There has been no time when all things were in harmony with Him, and consequently the "again," if the preposition of the verb in Eph. i. 10 be allowed this force, must contrast the historical realization with the divine ideal. But even if we drop the idea of "again," as some writers do, there yet remains the gathering together of all things in Christ,¹ which in any case is the chief thought of the word. All things without exception, material and spiritual, below man and above man are included. For Paul thought of Nature as sometime to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God (Rom. viii. 18-25). This is an event for the future age, when the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward has been re-

(7) Cosmical
harmony in
Christ.

¹ Comp. von Soden, *Hand-Kommentar*, iii. 1.

vealed, and when the salvation possessed now in its fulness only in the anticipation of hope shall have become an actual possession of the soul. But Paul gives only a hint. Perhaps he thought of a new earth which should be adapted to the spirit as the present one is adapted to the body. At any rate, he thought of a deliverance from the bondage of corruption, a cessation of the groaning and travailing of Nature, the unending strife and pain and death which are everywhere in the world. Instead of this there should be the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

Christ the realized centre of all things — this is the order for the fulness of time. It is impossible to understand this as a universal restoration, including even the devil and his angels, as Origen explained it, for this would involve an ignoring of Paul's explicit teaching (2 Thess. i. 8-9; ii. 8; Rom. ii. 12, etc.). It may be granted that the punitive righteousness of God is most emphasized in the earliest Letters,¹ and it is unquestionably true that in later Letters Paul does say much about the universality of redemption, the all-embracing love of God, the relation of Christ to the entire race, and the subjection of all hostile powers to Christ, but it does not follow that he had abandoned the doctrine of the perdition of the wicked, and had come to believe that all souls would at last enter Christ's kingdom and blessedness. It might as well be argued that when Paul in Rom. xi. 25 declares that "all Israel shall be saved," he means every individual Israelite of all the ages. The language is plainly rhetorical. So in the passages that are here in question. To understand the "all things" which are to be summed up in

¹ See Usteri, *Entwicklung des paulinischen Lehrbegriffs*, p. 372.

Christ, and the "all things" that are to be reconciled unto Him in an absolutely comprehensive sense would be against the general trend of Paul's teaching. When all things are brought into organic relation to Christ, then there will have been a removal of the elements of disorder, an abolition, as Paul says, of all hostile rule and authority (1 Cor. xv. 24). All enemies shall have been put down, and given over to their fate, far away from the face and glory of the Lord (1 Cor. xv. 25; 2 Thess. i. 9). This having been done, it will be true, and gloriously so, that all things have been reconciled unto God through Christ (Col. i. 20). In this outlook upon cosmical harmony in Christ we have the most comprehensive expression of Paul's thought of the Redeemer. This is the goal of history, the realization of the divine thought in creating all things unto Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST

THE Christian doctrine of the Church is chiefly from Paul. To his Epistles we are indebted for the profoundest views of its nature and office. The Greek word which is translated church (ἐκκλησία) means assembly or congregation. Thus the Septuagint frequently rendered the Hebrew word of the Old Testament which is translated congregation or assembly (Dt. xxiii. 1-3; Joshua viii. 35; Ezra x. 1). It was not, like our word "church," a distinctively religious term, that is, in Paul's time. Luke employs it in a political sense (Acts xix. 32, 39, 41), and Paul also may have done so. There is no evidence that the apostle used the word with any reference to its etymology, as though meaning by it those who had been *called out* from the world. He meant an assembly of God's people, a company of Christian believers, a congregation of disciples (1 Thess. i. 1; Gal. i. 2; Col. iv. 16). He does not limit the size of a company that shall constitute a church. The very word "assembly" implies several members, and at the same time the expression "church in the house" necessarily denotes a comparatively small number. In the house of Nympha, in Laodicea, some believers, perhaps only a portion of the Laodicean church, were in the habit of meeting, and

(1) General
conceptions
of the
Church.

Paul calls this small company a church (Col. iv. 15). Prisca and Aquila had a church in their house when they lived in Ephesus, and later when they were in Rome (1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. xvi. 5). So Philemon in Colossæ (Philemon 2). Whether a church in a house had any formal organization, we are not told. Paul uses the word "church" both in a local and a universal sense. It denoted, for instance, the company of Christians at Corinth, and the various individual assemblies in Galatia; it denoted also the entire body of believers in Corinth, in Galatia, and elsewhere (1 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 2, 13; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Eph. i. 22; iii. 10).

A second figure used by Paul to convey the church idea is "house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15; Eph. ii. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16). This designation was of Jewish origin. What had been said of the temple in Jerusalem was transferred to the company of God's people. They were henceforth God's dwelling-place on earth. Christians individually and as a congregation are a temple of God, a habitation (*κατοικητήριον*) of God in the Spirit. It follows from this figure, strictly speaking, that only those in whom God dwells, *i.e.* only genuine Christians, constitute the house of God, which is the Church.

The third figure in which Paul sets forth the idea of the Church is that of "the bride of Christ" (Eph. v. 22-23). This is incidental, being introduced as an illustration into Paul's exhortation to wives and husbands. He does not directly characterize the Church as the bride of Christ, but the entire passage shows that he thus thought of it.

Again, the apostle finds a typical reference to Christ and the Church in the passage in Genesis which refers

to a man's relation to his wife (Gen. ii. 24; Eph. v. 31-32). Paul's conception of the Church's marriage with Christ is that it belongs to the future, since the Church when presented to Christ is to be without spot or wrinkle, which will not be true until the consummation of all things. This conception of the Church as the bride of Christ plainly involved three fundamental ideas in Paul's mind,—those of the Church's subjection to Christ (Eph. v. 22-24), Christ's love of the Church (Eph. v. 25-30), and the future ethical oneness of the two (Eph. v. 31-32).

The last figure in which the idea of the Church appears in the writings of Paul is peculiar to him. It is that of the Church as "the body of Christ" (Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 27; Eph. i. 22; ii. 16; iv. 4, 12, 16; v. 23, 30; Col. ii. 19; iii. 15). According to this, Christ and the Church constitute a living organic whole. Members of the Church are members of Christ, each member having its own special function, and all the body making increase for Him. The importance of the individual member and the unity of all the members are alike emphasized by Paul in this significant symbol. It expresses also the thought of the absolute subjection of the Church to Christ in all things (Eph. i. 22-23). He is the head of the Church in two senses, according to Paul. First, He is its head as the husband is the head of the wife, *i.e.* He is lord of the Church. He has authority over it. In this use of the term, Christ is thought of as distinct from the Church. But, second, He is also the head of the Church in this sense, that the two constitute one organism, the head being typical of Christ, and the body being typical of the Church.

This symbol of the Church as the body of Christ expresses the thought that the Church is necessary to

the manifestation of Christ's life upon earth. It is His fulness (*πλήρωμα*), that and that alone on the earth which He fills, and in which He works (Eph. i. 23), or, perhaps better, it is His *complement* (1 Cor. xii. 12-30). The individual believer manifests the life of Jesus,¹ but only a particular aspect of that life, not the whole of it (2 Cor. iv. 10; Gal. ii. 20). The entire company of Christian believers manifests the life of Jesus far more perfectly than any individual member can. They together are His body, and the whole body is needful to the expression of the whole complex life.

The organization of the Church which is implied or referred to in the Pauline writings is simple, and even this simple organization is nowhere emphasized. The first reference to organization among Paul's converts is in connection with the first missionary journey. As the apostle returned through the fields where he had preached, he and Barnabas appointed elders in every church (Acts xiv. 23). The churches had already continued not a little time without officially appointed elders, for the events of Acts xiii.-xiv. must have occupied some months at the lowest estimate, and during that time the churches had been without elders. Luke's account of the second missionary journey of Paul makes no reference to organization, not even in connection with the great work in Corinth, where Paul labored more than a year and a half (Acts xviii. 11). Neither does the report of the third journey refer to organization, with the exception of a single case (Acts xx. 17). The *elders* of the church at Ephesus were called by the apostle to meet him at

(2) Church organization.
(a) Not emphasized in Paul.

¹ Abbott, *International Critical Commentary on Ephesians and Colossians*.

Miletus. It may reasonably be inferred from Luke's account of the missionary activity of the apostle that Paul did not greatly emphasize organization in his work, and certainly that he did not introduce startling novelties in organization. Passing from Luke's narrative to Paul's own Letters, we find that they seldom refer to organization in any way. He exhorts the Thesalonians to know them who are *over* them in the Lord (1 Thess. v. 12), and this naturally implies officers. In three passages he enumerates certain offices and functions (1 Cor. xii. 28; Rom. xii. 6-8; Eph. iv. 11). The Epistle to the Philippians is addressed to all the saints, with the bishops and deacons (Phil. i. 1). In no other Epistle does the address mention official persons, and in this one they are mentioned *after* all the saints. The Pastoral Epistles do not add to the offices that are mentioned, for they know only the bishop and deacon; but they dwell somewhat on the needful qualifications for these offices. Paul's change of view in regard to the Parousia, putting it now farther away than he had formerly done, accounts for the greater interest in church organization which is apparent in his later Letters.

Paul recognizes the original circle of apostles, though he speaks of them as "The Twelve" but once (1 Cor. xv. 5). These men were witnesses of the resurrection, were apostles before him, and with him had been set forth a spectacle unto the world (1 Cor. xv. 7; Gal. i. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 9). They were the first gifts of the risen Christ to men, — first in time, and doubtless also first in dignity and power, in Paul's thought (Eph. iv. 11). He himself assumed to have authority over the churches which he had founded, and over others as well which had not been founded by

(b) The apostolate.

apostles, as, for instance, those at Colossæ, Laodicea, and Rome. He seems to have conceded the same authority to the other apostles (Rom. xv. 20). He does not speak of the qualifications for this office, as he speaks of the qualifications for the offices of bishop and deacon, and it may thence be inferred that he did not regard it as permanent. As an apostle, Paul considered himself appointed unto the special work of laying foundations (1 Cor. iii. 10), particularly among the Gentiles (Gal. ii. 8). And he believed that he was equipped for this work with special power and authority.¹ He says that Christ wrought through him in the power of signs and wonders (Rom. xv. 18). He pointed the Corinthians to the signs of an apostle which had been wrought among them (2 Cor. xii. 12). His proclamation of the Gospel to the Galatians was of such sort that he was ready to anathematize an angel from heaven who should preach a different doctrine (Gal. i. 8). Such was his own apostleship, and it is natural to suppose that he thought of the older apostles as similarly equipped. In that case we must suppose that he uses the word in a broad sense when he speaks of Silvanus, Timothy, and Epaphroditus as apostles, for there was nothing unique in their ministry.

The next office which appears in the Pauline churches, in the order of time, is that of bishop or elder. Etymologically, the bishop (*ἐπίσκοπος*) is one who ^{(c) Bishops} looks upon his flock, an overseer, and the ^{and elders.} elder (*πρεσβύτερος*) is simply the man of years, and presumably of experience; but Paul recognizes no distinction whatever between the terms (Acts xx. 17, 28; 1 Tim. iii. 1; v. 17).

¹ Gloel, *Der Heilige Geist*, etc., p. 324.

Paul's practice in organizing churches so far as Luke's record of the missionary journeys is concerned, was to appoint more than one bishop in each church. Such was the case at Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Ephesus. This statement of Luke is confirmed by the Epistles. In Philippi there was a plurality of bishops (Phil. i. 1), so in Ephesus and in the cities of Crete (1 Tim. v. 17; Tit. i. 5).

The gifts of bishops, as the gifts of other Christians, varied. Some had the faculty of governing, others that of teaching (1 Tim. v. 17; Acts xx. 28). Apparently the gift of ruling well was not common in the church at Ephesus, and therefore the apostle sought to develop it by attaching to it special honor. The chief duty of bishops was feeding the flock of God, and hence they are called shepherds and teachers (Acts xx. 28; Eph. iv. 11).

The method of appointing bishops in the Pauline churches is not plain. The language employed in Acts xiv. 23 and Tit. i. 5 does not decide against church action, though the initiative in the former case was taken by Paul and Barnabas, and in the latter case by Titus at Paul's direction. If Paul followed the custom of the earlier Church, as that appears in connection with the diaconate, he allowed the congregation to have part in the election (Acts vi. 3). But we must go farther than this. The complete autonomy of the Church which is recognized in matters of discipline¹ necessarily involves its autonomy in other matters. This was not limited to any office within the Church, so far as Paul's Epistles inform us, but it was limited in the apostle's lifetime by his unique relation to his churches and by his para-

¹ See page 188.

mount moral influence. Hence it must be held that Paul recognized the Church as qualified to elect its officers, though he, as the spiritual founder of the Gentile churches, and their recognized teacher, naturally took the initiative in organization. On the qualifications necessary to the office of bishop, Paul wrote somewhat fully in his Letters to Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. iii. 1-7; 2 Tim. ii. 24; Tit. i. 6-9). But even in these Epistles no peculiar sacredness attaches to the office, and no authority is attributed to the officers but that which is based on their moral and intellectual worth. Much is said of the practical qualifications for the office, nothing whatever of its prerogatives. The doctrine is wholly unlike the hierarchical ideas of the beginning of the second century. Paul recognized at the outset that the office of bishop is a worthy object of ambition, something that might properly be sought (1 Tim. iii. 1). A candidate should have considerable Christian experience, for there is danger that a novice might have his mind clouded by conceit (1 Tim. iii. 6). The candidate must also be above reproach, as to general character, one to whom even the unbelievers would give good testimony (1 Tim. iii. 2, 7). If he has married, he must be the husband of one wife.¹ He must also demonstrate his fitness to be a bishop over the Church by governing his own family well (1 Tim. iii. 5). But the greatest emphasis falls upon the moral character of the candidate. The intellectual and spiritual qualifications are not numerous. In the sphere of the former, it is required that the candidate should have an aptness for teaching, and should have a mind well poised, not easily turned aside by appeals through the feelings or the

¹ Comp. page 136.

senses (1 Tim. iii. 2 ; Tit. i. 8). In the sphere of the latter, it is required that the candidate be a holy man, one who is approved from the side of God, and also that he be a man who holds to the sound words of the Gospel as it has been taught him (Tit. i. 8-9). Other points are specified that fall within the sphere of good morals. Negatively, the candidate must not be a self-willed man, who will lord it over the Church, having his own way at all costs ; and he must not be avaricious. He cannot be accepted if he is liable to be quarrelsome over wine, and if he readily comes to blows when provoked (1 Tim. iii. 3 ; Tit. i. 7). Positively, he must be a righteous man, rendering to those about him that which is just and right ; he must be temperate in action, not inclined to hasty or extreme measures ; he must be peaceable in disposition, and gentle toward those who oppose him (Tit. i. 8 ; 1 Tim. iii. 2-3). Finally, he must have care that his outward, personal life be orderly and becoming (1 Tim. iii. 2).

On the *ordination* of bishops we have no word in Paul's Letters, for Timothy was not a bishop, but rather an apostle's representative ; and the language in 1 Tim. v. 22 refers not to the consecration of bishops, but to the bestowal of a blessing by a pastor upon a member of his charge. The consecration of Timothy was through the laying on of the hands of some presbytery, whether at Ephesus or elsewhere is not plain, and also the laying on of Paul's hands (1 Tim. iv. 14 ; 2 Tim. i. 13). This imposition of hands was accompanied in Timothy's case with words of prophecy, that is probably words of prayer or exhortation, or both (1 Tim. i. 18 ; iv. 14).

The second and only remaining office that certainly existed in the Pauline churches is that of deacon. This

is referred to by the apostle three times, perhaps four (Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8, 12; Rom. xvi. 1). In the church at Philippi there were several deacons, (*d*) Deacons as well as several bishops. Whether it was a ^{cons.} general custom to have more than one deacon in a church the Epistles do not suggest; but the precedent of the synagogue makes it probable. Whether Phœbe at Cenchreæ was an official of the church, or only a distinguished but unofficial servant, cannot be positively affirmed. Certainly the need of deaconesses existed, and Paul was not a man to oppose the admission of women into the diaconate; but this, of course, does not settle the question. The widows mentioned in 1 Tim. v. 9-16, regarded by Weiss¹ as belonging to the officials of the Church, are described simply as beneficiaries. No duties are mentioned which they are to fulfil. Paul speaks only of their relief.

Paul speaks but once of qualifications for the diaconate (1 Tim. iii. 8-13). Negatively, a deacon must be a man who has not two tongues, who does not talk in one way to one man and in a different way to another. He must be a man who does not change his convictions to suit his hearers. Also he must not be inclined to take too much wine (comp. Tit. ii. 3), nor be desirous of base gain, *i.e.* willing to sell his office for money (1 Tim. vi. 5). And, positively, he must be a man whose character and demeanor elicit respect from those with whom he has to do, who is above reproach in his relation to women; and a man who holds the faith in a pure conscience. This is in contrast to those who dilute or corrupt the truth of the Gospel. Like the bishop, the deacon also must be proved. There must be an inquiry into his case, to see whether

¹ *Biblische Theologie*, p. 468.

he has the needful qualifications. Nothing is said in Paul's writings of a formal induction of deacons into office.

The evangelist of the Pauline churches is an indistinct figure. It is not certain that the word implies a definite office; it may stand for a function only — (e) Evangelists. a function that might be exercised by a deacon, a presbyter, or any believer. The ancient view, followed by Meyer, was that the evangelist was an itinerating preacher. But the Epistles of Paul do not support this opinion. Timothy is the only evangelist whom they mention, and he was apparently stationed at Ephesus as the representative of Paul. There is no suggestion whatever that he made tours through the adjacent regions for the purpose of preaching the Gospel. In view of this fact, the evangelists have been described as independent co-workers of the apostles, though not having, like the latter, normative authority.

It is not possible to form a perfectly clear idea of the charismatic activities in the Pauline churches. Some (3) Spiritual gifts. of the spiritual gifts are mentioned only in connection with the church at Corinth; and of those that are mentioned, not all are intelligible. Paul gives an enumeration of various functions of the Christian life in 1. Cor. xii. It is not certain that he mentions all the activities which were known there, and of course it would be arbitrary to assume that these were the only or the chief forms in which the Spirit manifested or might manifest Himself in the life of the believer. Gloel¹ says that Paul would have rejected the idea that a complete enumeration could be given; that new needs would surely arise, and would as surely be

¹ Gloel, *Der Heilige Geist*, p. 324.

met by new gifts of the Spirit. Of those activities which are enumerated, the majority are such as found the special sphere of their manifestation in the meetings for public worship (1 Cor. xiv. 26).

In the enumeration of various classes of laborers given by the risen Lord for the perfecting of the saints, prophets are placed next to apostles (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11-12); yet, though given ^{(a) Prophecy.} by the Lord, as were the pastors, there is no indication in Paul's writings that prophets were ever appointed, as were bishops and elders. The prophet was not an officer, like the elder, but prophecy was simply a function of the Christian life.

Prophetic speech was of a practical nature, hence was intelligible, in contrast with speaking in tongues. It was for the edification, comfort, and consolation of believers (1 Cor. xiv. 3. Comp. Acts xv. 32), for the conviction and conversion of unbelievers (1 Cor. xiv. 24-25). It was believed that there was in prophecy an element of immediate revelation. One might receive a revelation while sitting in the place of worship, or one might come to the gathering for worship with a revelation previously received (1 Cor. xiv. 26, 30). This feature apparently marks off prophecy from teaching. The latter, like all the other spiritual gifts, is thought of as a manifestation of the one Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4), yet it is not a revelation. It is a product of reason under the guidance of the Spirit, that guidance which is assumed to be experienced by every believer. But prophecy is thought of as a direct communication of the Spirit. Hence the apostle commands that one who receives a revelation during public worship should be allowed immediate opportunity to make it known. If another is speaking,

he should stop, and let the fresh revelation be heard (1 Cor. xiv. 30).

Any one might have a revelation, as any one might have a teaching (1 Cor. xiv. 26). Though prophecy was the element in the worship at Corinth which was most highly esteemed by the apostle, it was not confined to any office or class. In keeping with the above distinction between a prophecy and a teaching, the "word of wisdom" and the "word of knowledge" are probably to be discriminated (1 Cor. xii. 8). The word of wisdom is more particularly the gift of the Spirit than is the word of knowledge. The latter is *according to* the Spirit, the former *through* the Spirit. There is therefore the larger element of reasoning in connection with the word of knowledge. The word of knowledge is properly man's own production, hence the propriety of the apostle's statement that knowledge (*γνώσις*) puffeth up (1 Cor. viii. 1). Knowledge goes beyond wisdom in this, that it makes the content of the latter its own conscious possession by reflection.¹ Hence the word *knowledge* is correlative with teacher, *wisdom* is correlative with prophet.

As the gift of prophecy might be possessed by any one, so it is assumed that all the congregation had ability to discern what the prophets spoke, to prove whether it was true. So the Thessalonians, while they are not to despise prophesying, are to prove all things uttered by the prophets, that is, they are to exercise their critical power (1 Thess. v. 21). It was natural that some had an especial faculty in proving what was spoken by the prophets, which appears to have been the case at

¹ See Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 370; Weizsaecker, *Das Apostolische Zeitalter*, p. 580.

Corinth (1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 29).¹ The exhortation to prove what was uttered by the prophets implies that they, whether consciously or otherwise, *might* give forth as from the Holy Spirit what did not express His mind. Paul himself esteemed the gift of prophecy (1 Thess. v. 21; 1 Cor. xiv. 39), and the only restriction which he laid upon the freest manifestation of the gift in Corinth was that there should be order, one speaking at a time, and the spirits of the prophets being subject to the prophets (1 Cor. xiv. 31-32).

The gift of speaking with tongues appears in the Pauline churches only at Ephesus and Corinth (Acts xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii-xiv). In the former place, ^(b) Glossolaly. the twelve men who spoke with tongues were not converts of Paul, though they were baptized by him. Hence glossolaly appears, strictly speaking, in but one of Paul's churches. It is admitted to be wholly different from the phenomenon at Pentecost, as that is described by Luke. That was a speaking with "other tongues" (Acts ii. 4), which Luke (erroneously, according to many scholars) represents as speaking in foreign languages; the speaking at Corinth was not in any language of earth. For it is said that he who speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, — to any men of any land, — but unto God (1 Cor. xiv. 2). But there would be no propriety in a man's speaking to God in some language foreign to his own. Nor would speaking in a foreign language be to one's own edification, as glossolaly is said to be (1 Cor. xiv. 4). And a speaking in any earthly language is excluded by Paul's statement that unbelievers, if they came into a Christian gathering where men were speaking with tongues, would say that

¹ Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 455.

these men were mad (1 Cor. xiv. 23). But the mere speaking in a foreign language does not expose one to the charge of madness. These details show that glossolaly was not a speaking in earthly languages. All the statements of the apostle lead us to think of the phenomenon in the Corinthian church as *ecstatic* speech. Thus the understanding of the one who spoke with tongues was unfruitful while he was speaking (1 Cor. xiv. 14). The spirit¹ was active, as was that of Paul when he was caught up to the third heaven, and that of John when he saw the visions of the Apocalypse; but the subject could not at once express in human speech his impressions and feelings (1 Cor. xiv. 14; 2 Cor. xii. 2; Apoc. i. 10; Rom. viii. 26). What he said was not the product of reason. It was rather an incoherent expression of a highly wrought spiritual state. Yet behind the inarticulate sounds there was something which, if interpreted, might edify the church. The ecstatic speech might be that of prayer or song or thanksgiving (1 Cor. xiv. 14-16). This fact may account for Paul's alluding to *kinds* of tongues (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28). An ecstatic song would differ in character from an ecstatic prayer. Weizsaecker supposes that the varieties of ecstatic speech were due to the varying intensity of feeling.²

The apostle did not disapprove of speaking with tongues, provided that certain conditions were fulfilled. First, there should not be more than two, or at the most three, ecstatic communications in any meeting (1 Cor.

¹ This *πνεῦμα* is so correlated with the understanding (1 Cor. xiv. 14-15) that it must be regarded as man's own, and not as a superhuman spirit which possesses man (Schmiedel). It is the spirit as separable from the physical part of man, and capable of receiving impressions through other than the ordinary channels of knowledge.

² *Das Apostolische Zeitalter der christlichen Kirche*, p. 590.

xiv. 27). Apparently there was much eagerness in the Corinthian church to speak with tongues, and several spoke at the same time. Hence there was confusion, and danger that unbelievers would regard the Christians as mad (1 Cor. xiv. 23, 33). Second, no one was to speak ecstatically unless there was some one to interpret (1 Cor. xiv. 28). Interpreting was a special gift, and it was very desirable that whoever spoke with tongues should possess it (1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 13). It may be inferred from this that the ecstatic state might come upon one, and pass away again in the course of an ordinary religious meeting (1 Sam. x. 5; xix. 20-24). But while Paul did not disapprove of speaking with tongues, he esteemed it less highly than the gift of prophecy. He himself spoke with tongues, yet not in public (1 Cor. xiv. 2-3).

It does not appear that Paul regarded the ecstatic state as one in which the Holy Spirit was especially active; nor is it plain that the phenomenon as a whole should be regarded as an evidence that the new religion had taken uncommonly strong hold upon the Corinthians. On the contrary, the Philippians and Thessalonians presented in the main a higher type of Christian life than did the Corinthians, and yet as far as the record goes there was among them no speaking with tongues.

The gifts of healing and discerning the spirit of prophetic addresses were possessed by members of the Corinthian church, but are not mentioned as appearing elsewhere (1 Cor. xii. 9, 10, 28, 30). The gift of healing, as the language of Paul indicates, was accompanied with varying degrees of power. This gift, like the others, is one by which the Spirit may be manifested (1 Cor. xii. 7). It is dis-

tinguished from the specific gift of working miracles, and yet it is not to be thought of as the result of a knowledge of medicine. It is probably to be regarded as a result of faith, while the gift of discerning spirits was intellectual. The gift of working miracles, as possessed by ordinary unofficial believers, is mentioned only in the Letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28-29). The apostle claimed the power (Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12), but it appears nowhere in the Pauline churches save at Corinth. The gift which Paul characterizes as "helps" (*ἀντιλήψεις*) is wholly undefined, save that it probably is *not* identical with the other gifts of this verse (1 Cor. xii. 28). The sphere of this activity is not limited, and it may be supposed to have referred not only to the sick and the poor, but also to various spiritual needs.

Yet others had a gift for governing (1 Cor. xii. 28). They were able to give wise counsel in matters relating to the conduct and direction of the church. Those possessing this gift are not characterized as officials. There is no more ground for thinking of office in their case than in the case of those who had the gift of helping. Indeed, the way in which they are mentioned rather implies that there were at this time no regularly appointed officers in the Corinthian church whose duty it was to govern.¹ Yet it does not follow that the church was without elders, and still less does it follow that the church was without deacons.

The gift of song was bestowed upon members of the church at Corinth, including both the ecstatic and the intelligible song (1 Cor. xiv. 15, 26). It was a part of the voluntary worship. Each sang, as he was moved,

¹ See Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 408.

an original song. We may perhaps compare the songs of Elizabeth, Mary, Zacharias, and Simeon, preserved by Luke. They were spontaneous, rhythmic outbursts of feeling. Besides the gift of song, exercised in public worship, Paul speaks of singing in common life (Eph. v. 18-19; Col. iii. 16). Christians should be filled with the Spirit instead of with wine, and as filled with the Spirit their conversation was exalted above the prose of ordinary unchristian life. It was rhythmical in its joy and hope. And as with the lips, so also with the heart was it the duty of Christians to sing unto the Lord. When His word and His peace dwelt in them richly, their teaching and admonition were in spiritual songs. This phenomenon in common life was analogous to the spontaneous songs in public worship. It was a mark of the profound impression made on men by the good news of Jesus Christ, and a feature which belonged especially to the period of the joyous childhood of the Christian religion.

We pass now to the rites of the Pauline churches, and first to baptism.

The language of Paul in two passages strongly favors the view that the common mode of baptism was immersion. He speaks of Christians as *buried* with Christ in baptism, and also says that they are therein *raised* with Him (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12). It is difficult to account for these figures of speech unless immersion was, or had been, the practice. At the same time it is not wholly probable that Paul immersed the jailer and his household, who were baptized at midnight, immediately on believing (Acts xvi. 33); nor is it in keeping with Paul's estimate of that which is external in Christian life to suppose

(4) Christian rites.

(a) Baptism. Method.

that he would have insisted rigidly upon any particular form.

Baptism was into the name of the Lord Jesus, or into Christ Jesus (Acts xix. 5; Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27). Just what words were spoken in connection with the act it is impossible to say, but doubtless the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was always a part of the baptismal form. The trinitarian formula of Matt. xxviii. 19 does not appear in the Pauline literature in connection with baptism.

As to the subjects of baptism, Paul's own practice, which was very limited, was to baptize believers with their households. Five cases of baptism by Paul are recorded. Of these, four are distinctly said to be household-baptisms, and the other one may have been (Acts xvi. 15, 33; I Cor. i. 14, 16; Acts xviii. 8). The ordinary household, of course, included children, and such households as that of the Philippian jailer and that of Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, doubtless included servants. The very conception of household-baptism implies that when there *were* children, they were not excluded from the rite. It is a necessary inference from this practice that baptism did not invariably presuppose faith in Christ on the part of the one baptized. It seems to have been assumed that the head of a family would carry all the members with him in his faith.

The significance of baptism is in Paul's teaching two-fold. With reference to the one baptized, it symbolizes a cleansing, naturally from the defilement of sin (Eph. v. 26; I Cor. vi. 11; Tit. iii. 5). More profoundly considered, it signifies death unto sin (Rom. vi. 3). He who accepts the ordinance thereby

confesses that he has broken with sin utterly and forever, as a man by physical death breaks with his earthly life. But the symbol contains a positive element also. It denotes consecration. As the Israelites were dedicated unto Moses in the Red Sea, to follow him as their leader, so believers are in baptism dedicated unto Christ (1 Cor. x. 2; Rom. vi. 3; Col. ii. 12; Gal. iii. 27). Henceforth they belong to Him. They have entered into fellowship with the risen Christ.¹ This is typified for Paul in the rising from the waters of baptism, as death with Christ is typified in the submersion under the water (Rom. vi. 4).² Thus baptism signifies the end of the old life and the beginning of a new life in Christ. Hence there is but one baptism (Eph. iv. 5).

It is sometimes affirmed that Tit. iii. 5 connects salvation with baptism more definitely than do the genuine Letters of Paul. It is said to have something of the later sacramentarian significance, and this because faith is not mentioned in connection with it. But how little an outward rite is here regarded as working salvation appears from the very next clause, which speaks of renewal by the *Holy Spirit*, and from the seventh verse, which traces justification *wholly* to grace, after the manner of Paul. Since, then, the apostle regarded baptism merely as a significant emblem, it cannot be said that his thought was foreign to the Israelitish spirit, or to the teaching of Jesus.³

Since baptism is into Christ, it follows that it admits to the Church. This is the "one body" into which believ-

¹ Comp. James Morison, *St. Paul's Teaching on Sanctification*, p. 6.

² Pfeiderer thinks this view of baptism was original with Paul.

³ Comp. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 179. That the rite was not a creation of Paul, see Teichmann, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1896, Article, *Die Taufe bei Paulus*.

ers are baptized (1 Cor. xii. 13). We should also expect, even if we had no direct evidence to that effect, that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, was thought of by Paul as communicated in a special way in baptism, since this signifies an entrance into vital fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. ii. 12; 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. iv. 30; Tit. iii. 5); and there cannot be fellowship with Christ unless one has the Spirit of Christ (Rom. viii. 9). Further, it is said regarding the twelve men whom Paul baptized in Ephesus, that the Spirit was given to them in connection with their baptism (Acts xix. 1-7). This does not mean that up to that hour they had been wholly without the influence of the Spirit, but it means that they then received a fuller impartation of the Spirit as an equipment for Christian service.

This thought, that the believer received the Spirit in a special sense in connection with his baptism, is directly involved in various passages (*e.g.* 1 Cor. ii. 12; 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. iv. 30; Tit. iii. 5). But, as said above, the thought is inseparably associated with Paul's conception of baptism as baptism into Christ. It is not plain that there was symbolic laying on of hands in baptism, to signify the impartation of the Spirit, though Luke records that, in the case of the men whom Paul baptized in Ephesus, the apostle laid his hands upon them. The objection is made that Paul would not have spoken about baptism, somewhat indifferently as he did, if he had thought of it as accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. i. 14-17).¹ It is true that he regarded his work as preaching the Gospel rather than baptizing, but it does not follow that he could not have regarded the gift of the Spirit as associated with baptism. And it remains

¹ Weizsaecker, *Das Apostolische Zeitalter*, p. 572.

true that, although he did not, as a rule, baptize, he yet represented baptism in his unquestioned Epistles as symbolizing the believer's entrance into the fellowship of Christ. The significance which some members of the church at Corinth attached to the rite of baptism may be inferred from the custom of being baptized for the dead, that is, *in behalf of* the dead (1 Cor. xv. 29). It was manifestly thought that baptism was necessary in order to have a part in Christ and the resurrection; and it was believed that a substitutional baptism would be accepted by the Lord. It must be assumed that those who had died without baptism had yet possessed some faith in the Lord, for otherwise it is inconceivable that Christians would have undergone baptism in their behalf. To have done so would have been to hold that baptism could take the place of faith in Christ; but it is improbable that any of Paul's converts held such a view; and had they done so, Paul would not have left it unrebuked. It is to be noticed that Paul neither indorses nor condemns this custom; he simply uses it as an illustration.¹

The second rite met with in Paul's churches is referred to, in its entirety, once as the "Lord's Supper," and once as the "table of the Lord" (1 Cor. xi. 20; x. 21). Paul does not use the word "communion" as a name of the rite, but rather as an explanation of its significance (1 Cor. x. 16). He also refers to it once indirectly as a festival, in the verb which is rendered into English, "let us keep the feast" (1 Cor. v. 8). Luke refers to it once as the breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7), but Paul does not use this expression as covering the entire supper (1 Cor. x. 16).

(b) The
Lord's
Supper.
Designations.

¹ Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 513.

As regards the observance of the Lord's Supper, we learn that it followed a common meal. This was the Mode of observance. practice in Corinth, and was probably the general practice, in imitation of the original celebration (1 Cor. xi. 21). To this common meal each participant or family brought what was desired. This custom was the occasion of gross excess and profanation in Corinth. The rich ate apart, and the poor went hungry. Some became drunk, and this as well as the bad spirit engendered by the exclusiveness of the rich made it impossible for them truly to observe the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 20-22). Yet Paul did not abolish the common social meal in Corinth because of these excesses. He only insisted that hunger should be stilled at home, and that the meal before the Lord's Supper should be orderly, and be observed in a brotherly spirit (1 Cor. xi. 33-34). In the memorial observance, the breaking of bread was held to be significant, and was continued in imitation of the example of Jesus (1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 24). Words of thanksgiving were spoken in connection both with the bread and the wine (1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 24).¹ It does not appear who spoke these words, what sort of bread and wine were taken, or in what attitude the participants received the same. Neither does it plainly appear what the custom in the Pauline churches was regarding the frequency of observing the Supper. It might be inferred from Luke's words that it was regularly observed on the first day of the week (Acts xx. 7).

Paul regarded the Lord's Supper as a means of spir-
Significance. itual nourishment. It takes the place of the spiritual meat and spiritual drink which the Israelites had in the wilderness (1 Cor. x. 1-13). It is

¹ Comp. Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 273.

the antitype of the manna, and the water from the rock. As by these the ancient people of God were supported in the years of wandering, so Christians are sustained during their pilgrimage by the bread and wine of Christ. For by these means they are brought into communion with Him. Bread and wine are symbols of His body and blood. As the Jewish priest who partook of the sacrifices of the altar thereby entered into fellowship with the altar, or with the God of the altar, and as the Gentiles who ate meat that had been sacrificed to demons thereby entered into fellowship with the demons, so the believer by participating in the bread and wine of the Lord's table participated in Him whom the bread and wine typified (1 Cor. x. 14-22).

The believer's thought is turned by the Lord's Supper directly to Christ sacrificed; but Paul's conception of fellowship realized through the Lord's Supper is certainly not a fellowship with a historical name, but with a now living Person in His historical work. It cannot be argued from 1 Cor. xi. 27 that Paul thought of the body and blood of Christ as really present in the bread and wine.¹ The language "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," means guilty of sinning against the Lord's body and blood; but they can manifestly be sinned against if symbolically present. And, further, the general teaching of Paul is against any realization of fellowship with Christ except through faith. It is not realized by contact with physical bread and wine.

The significance of the Lord's Supper in Paul's teaching is not exhausted by the idea of spiritual nourishment. It is also a memorial service according to Paul and his pupil Luke (1 Cor. xi. 24-25; Luke xxii. 19-20).

¹ Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 342.

As such it implies the absence of Christ — Christ as He had appeared to men in a visible form. Paul regarded the Lord's Supper also as a proclamation of the death of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 26). It is a testimony, in symbol, that Jesus died, a confession that He died for men. And Paul says that it will continue such till Christ comes.

It is the thought of some writers that the Lord's Supper did not become a sacrament until it was made one by the influence of Paul. Now it is true that, *as far as our records go*, Paul was the first to unfold the deeper meaning of the Supper; but it does not follow that, prior to his time, believers had seen in it only an act of remembrance. Wherever the words of Jesus were current, believers had in their possession the germs which Paul unfolds.

The hints regarding worship in the Pauline churches are meagre. The place of worship for the original band of Christians in Jerusalem was the temple (Acts ii. 46; iii. 1), and for Paul in his journeys it was the synagogue, so long as he was allowed there (Acts xiii. 14; xiv. 1; xix. 8, etc.). He preached in a variety of other places also, — by the riverside, in prison, in his own hired dwelling, in the homes of Christians, and in the school of Tyrannus (Acts xvi. 13, 31; xxviii. 30; Phil. i. 13; Acts xix. 8; xx. 7). The indication is that Gentile Christians usually met, in Paul's time, in private houses (Rom. xvi. 5; Col. iv. 15; Philemon 2; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 19). With increase of numbers and means there would naturally arise a demand for larger rooms than private houses could afford, and this demand would be met according to the means of different congregations.

(5) Worship.
(a) Place
and time.

With regard to times of worship, little can be said. Paul rejected the Jewish idea that particular days are in themselves holier than others (Rom. xiv. 5; Gal. iv. 10; Col. ii. 16). He maintained that all days are equally sacred, and that the Christian sacrifices his freedom in the Lord when he descends from this high plane to observe days and seasons, as though they were especially holy. But at the same time there is no trace that Paul ever departed from the practice of setting apart one day in the week for worship. He met with the Jews and with Jewish Christians on their Sabbath (Acts xiii. 42, 44; xvi. 13). The believers in Troas who, if not converts of Paul, were doubtless, in faith and practice, of the Pauline stamp, met together on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts xx. 7). It is assumed that the congregations in Corinth, and in the Galatian churches, had especial regard for the first day of the week, from the fact that it was the day in which they set apart their money for Christian uses (1 Cor. xvi. 2). It is difficult to understand this feeling in Gentile churches unless they had received from Paul direction and authority for observing the first day of the week as the day for worship. There can be no doubt that Paul, holding the view which he did of the significance of Christ's resurrection, would regard the first day of the week as preëminently fitted to be the day for rest and worship.¹ But he certainly did not regard it as any more sacred in itself than other days.

There is no trace of a fixed form of worship in the Pauline churches. On the contrary, in the ^{(b) Elements} only church of whose meetings for worship ^{of worship.} we have any important details, the exercises were mainly,

¹ Comp. Heinrici, *Korinthier*, i. 24.

if not wholly, of a voluntary character. Each member was at liberty to produce a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, or an ecstatic utterance (1 Cor. xiv. 26). Paul allowed this, but gave directions for the avoidance of disorder. Here was anything but stereotyped form. Each meeting consisted of original manifestations of the new life. Different persons had different gifts; but all were assumed to have *some* gift. It may be safely affirmed that the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures formed a part of the public services, as a rule. The apostle writes to his converts in Galatia and Corinth, and to the Christians in Rome, as to those who were acquainted with the Old Testament (1 Cor. x. 1; Gal. iii. 16; Rom. vii. 1). This acquaintance with the Old Testament on the part of Gentiles can scarcely be accounted for unless the Scriptures were read in the weekly meeting.

Prayer is referred to as a voluntary part of the worship in Corinth (1 Cor. xiv. 14-16). This was prayer in ecstatic speech. At a later time, Paul enjoins upon Timothy, as his representative in Ephesus and the surrounding country, to see that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men; that in every place, that is, every church in his charge, the men should pray, holding up holy hands (1 Tim. ii. 1-2, 8). This was intelligible prayer, and apparently by definite persons, bishops, or others, who were appointed unto the service. It seems to have been customary, at least in Corinth, for those who listened to say "Amen" at the close of the prayer (1 Cor. xiv. 16).

It is not certain that the doxologies and benedictions in Paul's Epistles are evidence that such formed part of public worship.¹ It may well be that their existence in

¹ Weizsaecker, *Das Apostolische Zeitalter*, pp. 602-603.

Paul's Epistles accounts for their use in the Church service of a later day. They cannot be regarded as traces of a ritual. Nor is there evidence for regarding the Aramaic words "Abba" and "Maran Atha" as coming from an early Christian ritual (Rom. viii. 15; 1 Cor. xvi. 22). They had doubtless been inherited from the earliest Christian times as a part of the religious vocabulary, but not necessarily as liturgical in character. The case, however, is otherwise with 1 Tim. iii. 16: —

Who was manifested in flesh,
Justified in spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached among Gentiles,
Believed in the world,
Taken up in glory;

and 2 Tim. ii. 11-13: —

If we died with [Him], we shall also live with [Him];
If we endure, we shall also reign with [Him];
If we shall deny, He also will deny us;
If we are faithless, He remains faithful,
For He cannot deny Himself.

It is altogether probable that these passages, perhaps only fragments of longer productions, were recited or sung by Christians.

As to the believers who might participate in the public worship, Paul makes no restriction whatsoever. It is certain that women took part in public prayer in Corinth, and also prophesied (1 Cor. xi. 5). There is no evidence for the view that the meetings in which Paul allowed the women to participate were only *small* gatherings of believers, and not the church meetings proper. But even if there were such evidence, still the principle is conceded; if they

could take part in the worship when fifty were present, it is not probable that Paul would forbid it when there were one hundred or five hundred present.

Further, when Paul says regarding public worship, that each one has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation, it is arbitrary to limit the statement to men (1 Cor. xiv. 26). The subsequent utterance, to the effect that women should keep silence in the churches, is only in *seeming* conflict with the teaching of chapter xi. For the speaking which xiv. 34 prohibits is not necessarily a taking part in public worship. The context does not require this, and chapter xi. makes such an interpretation improbable at the outset. Heinrici¹ thinks that the passage prohibits a too forward asking of questions during the public teaching. This is suggested by Paul's own language. He says (vs. 35), if they would *learn* anything, let them ask their own husbands at home. It was then a matter of *learning*, not of taking part in the worship. It is impossible that Paul spoke in this way in reference to prayer addressed to God, or exhortation addressed to fellow-believers. That would not have been for *learning*. Weizsaecker² thinks that the prohibition concerned only participation in the *official* action of the Church. This is less probable than the other explanation. It is plain that the speaking which was prohibited was of such a sort as would indicate that the woman was not in subjection to her husband (1 Cor. xiv. 34). But no speaking to God could be open to this charge. As before Him, in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female (Gal. iii. 28). There

¹ *Korinthier*, i. 298.

² *Das Apostolische Zeitalter*, p. 688. Comp. Schmiedel, *Hand-Kommentar*.

must have been some tendency among the married women in the Corinthian church toward a self-assertion which conflicted with the divinely appointed headship of their husbands. It is not said what this was. Surely it is unscientific to assume that it was praying or prophesying, or the exercise of any of the charismatic gifts of believers. The passage in 1 Tim. ii. 12 presents a similar antithesis. Teaching is coupled with having dominion over a man. The teaching that is interdicted is such as disregards man's position. But no teaching by women, to which their husbands consented, would be opposed to the idea of the apostle. The fact that Paul had women associated with him in Christian work in Philippi (Phil. iv. 2-3); the fact that he commends the work of Phœbe, which was public work (Rom. xvi. 1-2); the fact also that he sends greetings to Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis, mentioning their work with praise (Rom. xvi. 12-13; and the fact that Prisca and Aquila had a church in their house in Rome (Rom. xvi. 5) and Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 19), Prisca being recognized no less honorably than Aquila, — these facts all lie in line with the teaching of 1 Corinthians that women were in no particular hindered from participation in public worship.

There are few cases of discipline referred to in the Epistles of Paul. He as apostle reproveth, rebukes, and threatens. The right to do this lay of course (6) Discipline in the fact that he was the father of the churches to which he wrote (1 Cor. iv. 15). The right was moral rather than hierarchical. The only ecclesiastical punishment of which we have any report in Paul's writings was excommunication. This was inherited from the synagogue.¹ There are two, possibly three, cases

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 138-139.

of excommunication in the Pauline Epistles. In one passage the church is exhorted by the apostle to act, it being throughout assumed that the church had the right (1 Cor. v. 1-13). In one passage the church is represented as having acted, a majority voting against the obnoxious person and a minority voting in his favor, and Paul beseeches the church to forgive the offender (2 Cor. ii. 6, 8). In the third passage there is no reference to church action (1 Tim. i. 20). The apostle says that *he* has delivered two offenders to Satan that they might be taught not to blaspheme. Agreeably with the fuller statements of the Corinthian Epistles it may be assumed that in this case also the apostle did not act without the church. The man in Corinth whom Paul wished the church to deliver to Satan was a fornicator having married his stepmother. Hymenæus and Alexander denied the faith, and blasphemed. It is admitted that the delivering to Satan meant excommunication *at least*, perhaps more than this. Heinrici¹ thinks the language a figurative description of excommunication. Schmiedel² thinks of a miraculous punishment like that which is said to have been inflicted by Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira. The former view is preferable since the church is represented as inflicting the punishment, and there is no evidence that the Church as an organization ever had authority to strike an offender with death. True, Paul assures the church that he will be present in spirit, and that the power of the Lord also will be available, yet it is the church which is to act. The church is assumed to have power to judge them that are within (1 Cor. v. 13). And the idea of the Corinthian church uttering a sentence which invisible

¹ *Korinthier*, i. 163.

² *Hand-Kommentar*.

hands immediately execute in death upon the offender is something so unique that we must have clearer evidence before we can accept it as a historical fact. Excommunication may have been represented as a delivering unto Satan, inasmuch as he is the prince of this age (Eph. ii. 2), working in all the sons of disobedience. To be outside of the fellowship of Christ is to be in the realm and under the power of the adversary. In both the cases of delivering unto Satan, Paul has a pedagogic end in view. It is not for ultimate destruction, but for ultimate salvation. The destruction of the flesh is thought of by the apostle as of such sort that it will tend to the salvation of the spirit. Repentance therefore is necessarily involved as a consequence or accompaniment of this destruction. But whether this is to be regarded as brought about by the punishment of exclusion from the church, or as the result of some physical suffering, does not plainly appear. The flesh to be destroyed is the sinful nature, especially the evil passion referred to in 1 Cor. v. 1, and this destruction might be accomplished in a variety of ways.

As already said, the church at Corinth was expected to act in the matter, not any particular members, but the entire Church. It is for the Church as such to judge its members. The same thought of Church power as vested in the membership of the Church is plain in 2 Cor. ii. 5-11. This is regarded by some recent writers¹ as a case of discipline distinct from that of 1 Cor. v.; but however that may be, one thing is clear, namely, that the Church as a whole is assumed to have authority to proceed against its members. Paul

¹ So Schmiedel, Pfeiderer, Beyschlag, Ewald, and Bleek. Heinrich argues strongly for identification of the two cases.

does not veto their action, but beseeches them, now that the punishment has wrought sorrow in the offender, to forgive and comfort him (2 Cor. ii. 7-8).

Paul's conception of the Church's self-governing power is yet further manifest in his words concerning lawsuits (1 Cor. vi. 1-4). The Corinthian church went to law before unbelievers, a thing that was deeply painful to the apostle. It was not commendable that they went to law anywhere; it would be better to take wrong and be defrauded; but if they must bring the wrong before others for adjudication, then it should be brought before some of their own number,¹ that is to say, they should have a committee to settle their troubles. Here, then, it is implied that the Church had power in itself to establish tribunals for the settlement of differences. But this does not imply that the apostle had unworthy views of the importance of the State.² He held that the State was a divine institution; but that by no means made it necessary or desirable that the Church should bring its own troubles to the bar of the State. This, as the apostle saw, might very easily bring reproach on Christians.

¹ Comp. Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 77.

² So Pfeiderer, *The Influence of Paul*, p. 61.

CHAPTER IX

CONSUMMATION OF THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

THE eschatology of Paul, like that of the other New Testament writers, has gaps and obscurities. On not a single point does he give a complete statement, and the communications that he does make are not wholly intelligible. ^{Introductory.} Everything prophetic, says Neander, must be fragmentary, and hence cannot furnish us with clear and connected knowledge. What Paul himself said regarding his knowledge of spiritual things may doubtless be applied to his understanding of death and what is subsequent thereto: "We know in part," "We see in a mirror, darkly" (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12).

This is notably true of the first great eschatological question which is touched in Paul's Epistles, "The man of sin." The Thessalonians doubtless understood Paul's meaning better than we do. ^{(1) "The man of sin."} He assumes that they have much knowledge of the points under discussion (2 Thess. ii. 5-6). But it is now impossible to be sure of having fully recovered his thought. Some general features, however, are plain. ^{(a) The reference practical.} And, first, the reference to the man of sin is *practical*. Paul's readers in Thessalonica thought that the day of the Lord was just at hand (2 Thess. ii. 2). The apostle seeks to correct this mis-

understanding, and tells them of some things which will precede that day. First, there will be the falling away of men from the faith in Christ, some apostasy of which he had perhaps spoken to them, and hence to which he can now refer as to a well-known apostasy. And then there must be the coming of "the man of sin." Thus this son of perdition is introduced not on account of his own importance, but as a sign of Christ's coming. The Thessalonians need not expect the Parousia until this character appears. Further, the "man of sin" is represented as an individual, one in whom pride and opposition to Christ reach their utmost limit. Thus he is plainly in line with the false Messiahs and false prophets foretold by the Lord in His eschatological discourse (Matt. xxiv. 24); in line also with the symbol of Gog and Magog of Ezekiel and with that of the "little horn" in Daniel (Ezek. xxxix; Dan. viii. 9).

The coming to power of this "man of sin" will be the mark of the ripeness of evil for judgment, and hence will be the signal of the Parousia. To this ripening of moral evil, which is here presented personally in the "man of sin," we have references in Paul's latest writings as well as in the earliest. Instruction is given to Timothy concerning seducing spirits which will go forth in the "last days," turning men away from the faith (1 Tim. iv. 1-5; 2 Thess. ii. 3). There will be men who withstand the truth as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, — men who, under a cloak of godliness, serve ungodliness (2 Tim. iii. 1-8; iv. 3-4). In the last days also grievous times shall come, times worse than the present. Here then, as in 2 Thessalonians, is the thought of a gradual ripening of evil and a consequent thickening of the conflict between believers and unbelievers.

It is not plain whether Paul thought of the "man of sin" as a Jew or a Gentile. It is true that the bitterest hostility toward his work had been from the ^(β) Jew or first mainly Jewish, but on the other hand ^{Gentile.} the language of 2 Thess. ii. 4, that the "man of sin" would sit in the temple of God and claim to be God, is more easily applicable to a Gentile than to a Jew. Pretension to divine honor was common among the Cæsars, but is scarcely conceivable as developed on Jewish soil. The idea of the apostle, that the "man of sin" would make the last assault on the kingdom of Christ, that he would be destroyed by the Lord Jesus at His coming, and that his destruction would thus be followed by the consummation of the kingdom, is in line with the views of the Jewish theology.¹ This taught that the last assault on the Messianic kingdom would bring the end; that this assault would be made by the Gentiles, and that there would be but one great destruction of the enemies. Paul thought that the "man of sin" would be developed in the near future, even as he expected the Parousia in his own lifetime (1 Thess. iv. 15-17). This expectation was not realized. But there is no reason to doubt that the essential thought of this Pauline apocalypse will yet be fulfilled. The coloring which it has from the age in which it arose is incidental. The temple and the Roman Empire which appear in it have passed away forever. The "man of sin" will not sit in the temple of Herod, and there be worshipped as God; neither will his final coming be checked by the Roman power. And perhaps we are no longer to think of a single person as em-

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 369-370; Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 307.

bodily the last manifestation of antichristian hostility. The Book of Revelation presents the final culmination of evil under two distinct symbols, each general in its character, — the beast out of the sea and the beast out of the earth (Rev. xiii. 1, 11). But this point concerns the *form* of the vision, not the essence. The central thought is plain. There is to be a ripening of evil for judgment; the culmination of this process is immediately to precede the Parousia; and by the Parousia of the Lord it is to be summarily destroyed. All this coincides fully with the teaching of the Apocalypse (Rev. xvi. 14; xix. 11–21). It is to be observed before closing this paragraph that the passage concerning the “man of sin,” doctrinally considered, is relatively unimportant. Paul nowhere touches it in his greater Epistles. It is found only in this brief Letter, written some sixteen years before the apostle’s death, the second in time of all his Letters. The apostle lived to modify his earlier view in one particular at least, that of the nearness of the Parousia.

Of comparatively little importance also is the fact of physical death, both because of the nearness of the Parousia and because of the overshadowing
 (2) Death and sleep. significance of what lies beyond the grave. Christ does not save His people from physical suffering and death (Rom. viii. 10). As a consequence of Adam’s sin, according to Paul, the entire race is doomed to die (Rom. v. 12–21; 1 Cor. xv. 22). Death shall eventually be abolished, but not until the Parousia (1 Cor. xv. 51). The only exception to the universal law of death will be those people who are alive at the Parousia; they will be “changed” (*ἀλλαγησόμεθα*), but will not die. While the fact of death remains for the believer as

for the unbeliever, its significance is entirely changed. The sting of death is taken away even here and now through faith in Christ, by which the power of sin is overcome (1 Cor. xv. 56-57). The believer dies unto the Lord, and in dying does not go outside of His jurisdiction and dominion, for He is Lord of the dead as well as of the living (Rom. xiv. 9). Even death cannot separate from His love (Rom. viii. 38-39). Death is among the things over which the Christian is lord because the Christian belongs to the living Christ (1 Cor. iii. 22).

The Jewish theology also represented the death of the righteous as comparatively free from the terror and evil bodings associated with the death of the unrighteous. The sinner is taken away by the angel of death, while the righteous man dies by the kiss of God.¹ From the new plane on which the Christian has been placed through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, dying and death wear a wholly different aspect from that which they present to unbelievers. To die is to fall asleep in Jesus (1 Thess. iv. 13-15; v. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 6, 18, 20, 51; xi. 30). The departed believers are "in Christ" (1 Thess. iv. 16). It is only of Christians, unintentionally perhaps, that Paul uses the figure of "sleep," though it was in his time a common euphemism for death. The essential point to be noticed in this conception of death is, that the departed believer is *in* Christ, in Him who is life and in whom death has no part. Those who are fallen asleep in Jesus are referred to by the apostle later as dead in Christ; but the object of Christ's death is that we might *live* together with Him, whether we wake or *sleep* (1 Thess. iv. 14, 16; v. 10). This constitutes the measureless dif-

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 322.

ference between Paul's view of death as a sleep, and the view of the heathen world. There is no suggestion in connection with Paul's use of the figure that he thought of the soul as leading a shadowy, troubled existence in death, half real, half unreal. Even the rabbinical theology rose higher than this in its conception of the departed righteous.¹ Paul teaches that the vital union of the soul of the believer with his Lord is not severed at death. The living disciple lives in the Lord, and, departed, he is still with Christ. Hence it is altogether probable that the figure of sleep is used by the apostle chiefly with reference to the *event* of death, and not as containing the idea that death is succeeded by a period of uncertain length in which the state of the soul resembles the state of sleep. When he speaks of the departed as being asleep,— he does once, 1 Cor. xv. 20,— this must be understood in harmony with the explicit teaching which will be stated in the next paragraph. Paul uses the language from the human standpoint. Those who fell asleep in death had not returned to be seen by mortal eyes. From the earthward side, and in contrast with the living, they were still asleep.² The view of Usteri,³ followed by some later writers,⁴ was that Paul, at one time, thought of the soul as sleeping between death and the judgment, but that later he adopted the view that the soul at death enters immediately into the better life with Christ. Usteri finds the former view in 1 Corinthians, and the latter in 2 Corinthians. Herein is manifest the

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 323, 326; Gftörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, ii. 81.

² Comp. Meyer, *Commentary on the Corinthians*, 5th German edition.

³ *Entwicklung des Paulinischen Lehrbegriffs*, Fünfte Ausgabe, 1834.

⁴ Cf. Pfeleiderer, *Urchristenthum*, p. 294.

weakness of his position. The Second Letter to the Corinthians was written but a few months, at the most, after the First Letter, and we can hardly assume that in this brief space Paul's view of death underwent so great a change. Further, there is no evidence that Paul's thought, during these months, was especially upon the subject of death. He was engrossed in his missionary work, and had far-reaching plans for future labor.

But while it does not appear that Paul's conception of death as found in 2 Corinthians is irreconcilable with that which has just been mentioned, it is certainly a somewhat different conception. Here he represents death as that which brings the believer *home to the Lord* (2 Cor. v. 8).¹ To be absent from the body means for him to be at home with the Lord. And this is something far better than remaining in the earthly house (Phil. i. 23). This idea is irreconcilably in conflict with any conception of the sleep in Jesus which does not allow to the soul the fullest consciousness and activity. And not only so, but this conception seems to allow no interval between death and the being at home (Phil. i. 21-24). A period of sleep is absolutely excluded, unless we suppose that Paul could have represented unconscious sleep as a being at home with the Lord, and also as something better than living here on earth in the service of his Saviour. His two conceptions of death, however, are at one in this, that the departed is *with Christ*. There is, therefore, in the doctrine of Paul, no place for an intermediate state of such sort as would in anywise deprive the believer of the presence

¹ Holtzmann supposes that Paul here refers to himself and a few exceptional cases; but on what ground can we thus limit the application of the passage?

of Christ. So the theology of the synagogue in its older form thought of the spirits of the departed as going at once to Gehenna or to Paradise. There was no intermediate place for righteous or unrighteous.¹

From death in Christ we pass to the more difficult subject of Christ's Parousia. Paul employs four terms

(3) The Parousia. (a) Terms. to denote the coming of Christ at the close of the present dispensation. The most common of these is Parousia (*παρουσία*), which means presence, or, as used in this connection, coming (1 Thess. ii. 19). A second term is revelation (*ἀποκάλυψις*), the uncovering of something concealed (2 Thess. i. 7). A third is manifestation (*φανερωθῆναι*), or the being manifested, as the verb, not the substantive, is used (Col. iii. 4). The fourth, found only in the Pastoral Epistles, is epiphany (*ἐπιφάνεια*) (1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1). Yet this word is found even in one of Paul's earliest Letters with regard to the coming of Christ's great opponent, and hence it might have been used of the coming of Christ Himself.

The time of the Parousia Paul designates variously as "the day of the Lord," "the day of Christ," and "the day of Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 2; Phil. i. 6; ii. 16). This is like the language of the old prophets, Jesus Christ taking the place of Jehovah (Joel ii. 1; Amos v. 18, etc.). The fundamental thought is the same. The Old Testament and the New, though with differing perspective, look for a signal and final manifestation of Jehovah for the judgment of His foes and the beatification of His people.

The words denoting Christ's coming and also the description of it seem to point to visibility, inasmuch

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, p. 327.

as Paul gives no suggestion that he employs the language in a symbolic sense. Thus "uncovering," "manifestation," and "epiphany" all suggest a visible appearance, though they do not absolutely require it. But Paul's language in the Epistles to the Thessalonians can scarcely be understood otherwise than of a visible coming. For he speaks of the Lord Jesus as being revealed from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire, and as taking vengeance upon them that know not God, *i.e.* upon ungodly men who are *still in the flesh* (2 Thess. i. 3-8). Those who believe, being also in the flesh, will marvel at Him, as He is manifested in glory (2 Thess. i. 10). Now while we are not required to think of all these details literally, we can hardly escape the impression that Paul thinks of something that the eye of flesh might perceive.

Again, Paul teaches that Christ in His Parousia will be accompanied by His angels (1 Thess. iii. 13; 2 Thess. i. 7). This feature was probably derived by him from the tradition of the early Church (Matt. xxiv. 31). In the First Epistle the reference to the angels might be understood as adding to the glory of the Parousia; in the Second Epistle it might be taken as heightening the awfulness of Christ's appearance to His enemies.

It is noticeable that Paul does not think of Christ as descending to the very earth at the Parousia.¹ On the contrary, His disciples are caught up and meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 13-18). Of a visible return of

¹ Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 264-265, thinks that, according to this passage in Thessalonians, Christ at His Parousia sets up His throne in the region midway between earth and heaven, puts down the dominions and powers that dwelt there, and with His people gathered around Him judges the world which is at His feet.

Christ *to the earth*, to complete His kingdom, there is no suggestion in Paul's teaching. As far as His kingdom is completed before the Parousia, it is completed through the spiritual presence of Christ in the hearts of men.

Paul made large practical use of the Parousia as an ethical force. He taught that it would come as a thief, unexpectedly, and therefore he would have his converts watchful (1 Thess. v. 2-6). He seems to have emphasized this point while in Thessalonica, for in his Epistle he says, ye know *perfectly* that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Of course they had learned it from him, for he was their spiritual father and teacher. Though unexpected, its coming would be accompanied by the voice of the archangel, and by the trumpet of God (1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 52). This feature belongs in general to the Bible's descriptions of God's appearing (Ex. xix. 16; Is. xxvii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 31; John v. 25). The phraseology varies, but the thought, in connection with the Parousia, is of a supernatural signal or call for the gathering together of men unto the consummation.¹ Paul wished his converts to keep the Parousia distinctly in mind. There is relatively more stress laid on this point in the first Letters than in the later ones, but even in these the exhortation is not wanting. The religious life of the Thessalonians was characterized by two things: on the one hand, by the service of the living God; and on the other hand, by waiting for His Son from heaven (1 Thess. i. 10). Again, Paul speaks of himself and his Philippian readers as waiting for a Saviour from heaven (Phil. iii. 20). He regarded this as the proper

¹ See Heinrici, *Sendschreiben an die Korinther*, i. 550.

Christian attitude. Looking for the blessed hope is a part of right character and conduct as truly as the living righteously in this present world (Tit. ii. 12). To love the appearing of Christ is a condition of receiving the crown of righteousness (2 Tim. iv. 8). Thus it was a very practical matter in the Christian life.

It appears from this conception of the Parousia that the apostle thought of it as likely to take place within the lifetime of those who were then living. He could not have spoken as he did about looking and waiting for the Parousia had he supposed that it was a century remote, much less had he dreamed that it was thousands of years distant.

Not only does the apostle's practical use of the Parousia point to its nearness, but there are specific statements to the same effect. His language implies that he thought his Thessalonian readers and he himself would live to see it (1 Thess. iii. 13; iv. 13-18; 2 Thess. i. 6-7). Nor is the expectation wholly wanting in the later Letters. Paul speaks as though some of his Corinthian readers would not sleep, but would be changed at the last trumpet (1 Cor. xv. 51-52). He still speaks as though he thought that he would be one of those who would be changed. The expectation of the Christians at this time is expressed in the Aramaic words, "Maran Atha," *the Lord comes*, which words seem to have been in wide circulation.¹ Still later Paul exhorts the Romans to renewed spiritual watchfulness and zeal by telling them that the day of the Parousia is at hand (Rom. xiii. 12). Later still he writes to the Colossians as though he thought they would live until the manifestation of Christ, and to the Philippians he

¹ See *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, x. 6.

says that the Lord is at hand (Col. iii. 4; Phil. iv. 5). In the Pastoral Epistles, while his expectation is, in general, unchanged, he has given up the hope of living to witness the Parousia. He writes as though believing that his younger fellow-laborer, Timothy, might live till the coming of the Lord; but for himself, the time of his departure is at hand (1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 6). Thus his view of the nearness of the Parousia underwent changes as the years passed. The vividness of his earlier expectations was dulled; and although the fact of the Parousia was equally certain to the aged Paul, it had receded somewhat into the future.

Coming now to the subject of the resurrection, we find that Paul is interested chiefly in the resurrection of believers. It is this which he partially describes, this for which he advances grounds of belief. He is in no uncertainty touching the resurrection of the unjust, but his teaching scarcely goes beyond the statement of the naked fact. His pupil Luke represents him as affirming in his speech before Felix that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust (Acts xxiv. 15),¹ and he records Paul's defence before Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 8), in which the apostle says, "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?" This statement is general, *all* the dead. The same doctrine is contained also in the Epistles. All shall stand before the judgment seat of God (Rom. xiv. 10-12), Paul says, and Christ Jesus is judge of the quick and dead, without exception (2 Tim. iv. 1). In view of these passages from the Acts and from Paul's Epistles we can-

¹ This passage shows that the Pharisees held to a resurrection of the unjust as well as of the just. Comp. Gfrörer, ii. 276.

not accept the view that the apostle did not teach the resurrection of the unrighteous.¹ He does indeed teach that the resurrection of *believers* stands in vital connection with their relation to Christ; but it cannot be inferred that those not thus related to Him do *not* rise. Paul teaches that Christ sustains important relations even to those who are *not* in Him, and nothing justifies the inference that Christ can raise the dead only in one particular way, namely, by virtue of their union with Him. The passages cited above are explicit as to the fact of a universal resurrection; but with the possible exception of one passage² (1 Cor. xv. 20-24) the teaching goes no farther than this.

Nearly all that the apostle says of the resurrection concerns the righteous. In arguing the certainty of this event he proceeds from the resurrection of Christ. This is the ground of his conviction. He is certain of the resurrection of Christ because: (1) it was according to the Scriptures; (2) it was supported by the testimony of many eye-witnesses; and (3) it was confirmed by his own experience (1 Cor. xv. 3-8). Nothing could be for him better established than the resurrection of Christ, and he made it the very foundation of his preaching. But the resurrection of believers stood as firmly established to his mind, and this because of their vital relation to Christ. The same fact that accounts for the moral resurrection of a man in this present time, accounts also for his resurrection into the life of the Messianic kingdom (Rom. vi. 5, 8; 1 Thess. iv. 14, 16; 2 Cor. iv.

(b) Resurrection of Christ and of believers.

¹ Comp. Pfeiderer, *Das Urchristenthum*, p. 295.

² See Heinrici, *Sendschreiben an die Korinther*, i. 493; Schmiedel, *Hand-Kommentar*, ii. 1.

14).¹ We are raised in Him and with Him. Death does not separate from Him, but the soul that is united to Him shares in His resurrection. This is the will and work of God. As He is uniformly assumed to have raised Christ, so it is He who shall raise the believer through Him.

The body of the risen spirit is spiritual, incorruptible, glorious, and powerful; it is a habitation from heaven, and is eternal; it is conformed to the glorious body of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 42-44; 2 Cor. v. 1-2; Phil. iii. 21). This last statement is at once the most definite and the most indefinite teaching of Paul on the subject. What the body of Christ's glory is Paul does not say, and probably did not know; but conformation thereto, while indefinite in detail, is definite in this, that it will be *glorious*. This conformation to Christ's body implies identity as to the essential character, but not identity in appearance. By a spiritual body is meant a body that is adapted to the spirit, as the present psychical body is adapted to the soul, that is, to the principle of animal life. As such a body, it is not exposed to corruption.

Again, the resurrection body is not something distinct in every respect from the old body. The old and the new have something in common, so that the apostle can say of the body, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." And again he says of those who are alive at the coming of Christ, "We shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). The body is not destroyed in the case of those who see the Parousia, but it becomes another body. It is the old fashioned anew (Phil. iii. 21). And yet in this refashioning the material is wholly dis-

¹ Comp. Weiss, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 399.

carded;¹ flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. xv. 50). The material body never rises. That which rises is spiritual and incorruptible. Paul's analogy of the wheat does not imply that he thought of matter as capable of being transmuted into spirit. That which bridges the gulf between the bare grain and its future body is the *vital principle* that is in it, and this principle of life is something other than matter.

The *time* of the resurrection is that of the Parousia. The dead in Christ rise when He descends from heaven, with the sound of the trumpet of God (1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 52). Resurrection, broadly considered, is already begun ^{(d) Time of the resurrection.} in that Christ is risen (1 Cor. xv. 23). But not until His coming shall they that are His arise. Then shall be the end. This word "end" (τέλος) is to be understood as in Matt. xxiv. 6, 14. It denotes the consummation of the present age. We are not justified in holding that the apostle's thought was this, "Then cometh the end of the *resurrection*." This idea that the resurrection will be in sections, chronologically distinct, is not to be found in Paul's Epistles, and this view of the words is not in keeping with what follows. There is no reason why Christ's delivery of the kingdom to the Father should be brought into such close relation with the resurrection of unbelievers. The act of delivering up the kingdom implies that the word "end" is not specific, referring merely to the resurrection of unbelievers, but is general, including the various

¹ See Gfrörer, ii. 282. Some of the rabbis, perhaps as early as Paul's time, taught that the resurrection body was only the present body ennobled, hence was material. The germ of this body they found in a certain part of the spine, which, they held, was indestructible by water, fire, or the blows of a hammer.

events of the consummation of the present age. There is, however, a certain difficulty connected with the question of the time of the resurrection. On the one hand, Paul unquestionably thought of the believer as going home to Christ at death (see above); on the other hand, he speaks of the resurrection as accomplished only at the Parousia. It must therefore be held, either that he thought of the resurrection as not essential to the being "at home" with the Lord, or that the two conceptions are with our present data irreconcilable. It is possible, perhaps probable, that the first view is the apostle's own inference from his consciousness of the believer's relation to Christ, while the second is the common Jewish view of the subject, which Paul did not wholly cast aside.¹

Paul teaches in a single passage that at the Parousia of Christ the saints then living, together with the risen believers, will be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 13-18). This "rapture," this being caught away, concerns all believers, both those who rise at the Parousia and those who are then changed without seeing death. Paul does not suggest that it concerns unbelievers. Indeed, his language seems to imply that it does not include them, since what he says, he says for the *comfort* of believers. The rapture brings them to the Lord, not to be separated from Him again. But such a bringing to the Lord could not be affirmed of unbelievers. They are to suffer punishment, eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might, when He shall come to be glorified in His

¹ Comp. Charles, *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity*, p. 395.

saints (2 Thess. i. 9-10). The rapture of the saints is akin to the ascension of the Lord (Acts i. 9). Like that it follows the resurrection, like that it brings the risen one to his own heavenly abode, and like that it is associated with the clouds. In both cases the clouds may be thought of as a symbol of the divine presence. Since the time when God went before Israel in a pillar of cloud, and came down in clouds upon Mt. Sinai, the Bible makes use of clouds as the veil and vehicle of the divine One.

Paul teaches that the function of universal judge belongs to Jesus Christ. This feature in the doctrine of the Messiah belongs to the New Testament, but is not found in the Jewish writings.¹ It is explicit in the teaching of Paul. The world is to be judged in righteousness by the one man whom God has ordained (Acts xvii. 31). He it is who shall render vengeance to all who know not God (2 Thess. i. 8-10). He shall judge the quick and the dead (2 Tim. iv. 1). The day of judgment is accordingly designated the *day of the Lord*, the *day of Christ*, and the *day of Jesus Christ* (2 Thess. ii. 2; Phil. ii. 16; i. 6). God is spoken of as judge, but He judges *through* Jesus Christ (Rom. ii. 16). Christ is the one who is directly engaged. It is only in passages where the apostle takes his stand before the advent of Christ, or where he speaks in accord with the Old Testament representations, that he speaks of God as the immediate judge (Rom. ii. 6; xiv. 10).

Judgment is once ascribed to the saints, when Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for bringing their troubles before the bar of Gentile courts (1 Cor. vi. 2-4). They

¹ See Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 291.

shall judge the world, and more than that, they shall judge even the angels. This can be understood only in connection with Paul's fundamental doctrine of the vital union of the believer with Christ. Christ and His disciples are inseparable. He is in them, and they are in Him. What concerns Him, concerns them also. They share His work and His suffering on earth; His glory and power in heaven (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 12). John has the same thought (Rev. iii. 21). Believers sit with Christ on His throne, sharing the functions of His throne. They have spiritual participation with Him in all His exalted activities.

The judgment of Christ will be a severe testing of each disciple's work. It will discriminate between the perishable and the enduring, as fire discriminates between stubble and gold (1 Cor. iii. 13-15).¹ In the judgment each individual stands for himself, giving an account of his own work (Rom. xiv. 12). The judgment will be according to works, but only as these are indices of character (Rom. ii. 6-8). It will be in righteousness, according to truth, and hence according to the inmost purpose of the heart (Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 2). The norm of judgment will be that law which has been given to men. The Jew will be judged according to the written law in his possession, the Gentile according to the unwritten law on his heart, and the Christian according to the law of Christ (Rom. ii. 12; 2 Thess. i. 8-10).

It seems to be taken for granted by Paul that the time of judgment is the day of the Parousia (2 Thess.

¹ Gfrörer (ii. 81) fancifully finds in this passage an allusion to a doctrine of purgatory, which he thinks existed among the Jews as early as Paul's time.

i. 9-10).¹ Since Paul held that dying believers entered immediately into their home with the Lord, and also that believers here and now are not only delivered from the wrath of God but have in Christ the certainty of being secure in the great future (Rom. v. 1-11), it must be held that he thought of their judgment, not as liable to develop anything against them, but rather as a final and public recognition of their life and salvation in Christ.²

The issue of judgment for the wicked is variously described by Paul, though chiefly in *general* terms. From the side of God or Christ, the fate of (c) Issues of the ungodly is to experience the divine wrath, judgment, indignation, and vengeance (1 Thess. i. 10; Rom. ii. 8; 2 Thess. i. 8). God will "destroy" the sinner (1 Cor. iii. 17). Christ will "deny" those who deny Him, and He will slay the man of sin (2 Tim. ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 8). Considered from the human side, the fate of the ungodly in the future is set forth under the terms "affliction," "corruption," "destruction," "death," "tribulation," "anguish," and "perdition" (2 Thess. i. 6, 9; Gal. vi. 8; 2 Cor. ii. 16; Rom. ii. 8; Phil. iii. 19). The terms that regard God's activity, as those which concern the suffering in itself, leave much to the imagination. They are positive and strong and awful enough to the guilty conscience, but they tell little about the nature and duration of the sufferings of the lost. The words "corrupt" and "corruption" suggest a fate in line with what Paul pictures as the judgment of God upon the Gentiles in this present age, namely, a giving over to ever increasing depravity (Rom. i. 18, 24, 26).

¹ Comp. Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, p. 318.

² For the view that Paul's doctrine of judgment is inconsistent with his teaching that the believer goes at death to be with Christ, see Pfeleiderer, *Urchristentum*, p. 297.

It is an existence the exact antithesis of the ideal of God. Instead of progressing toward the stature of Christ, it is forever gravitating toward the opposite pole of moral being.

The terms "destruction" and "perdition" are not used in the sense of annihilation.¹ This would conflict with the explicit teaching of the apostle. For he represents the reward of the righteous as something *more* than life; it is *blessed* life. The judgment of the wicked, which is the opposite of this, is something less or worse than existence, it is *wretched* existence. Destruction *away* from the face of the Lord is contrasted with glorious fellowship *with* Him (2 Thess. ii. 9-10). Corruption is contrasted with eternal life. But annihilation is the opposite of existence itself, not of blessed existence. Hence it does not correspond with Paul's term "destruction." And further the term "destruction" cannot be taken as suggesting annihilation because Paul uses with it the adjective "eternal" (2 Thess. i. 9). This is superfluous if destruction means annihilation, for the latter word involves the idea of finality in itself. And still further Paul speaks of the judgment of eternal destruction being inflicted upon the ungodly at the Parousia. If it meant annihilation, then the ungodly would have to be thought of as annihilated at the Parousia. But this is wholly inconsistent with the general teaching of the apostle. It leaves no place for the suffering which rose before him as an awful and sure fact, for which he employs so many and so strong terms. It is also to be noted that annihilation of the wicked at the Parousia would destroy the moral contrast between the lots of

¹ See Teichmann, *Die Paulinischen Vorstellungen von Auferstehung und Gericht*, p. 85.

the righteous and the unrighteous, which contrast existed for the apostle in the future age as certainly as in this age (1 Thess. iv. 17; 2 Thess. i. 9; Gal. vi. 7-8, etc.). It is in no other sense that he describes the condition of the ungodly in the future as one of *death*,¹ while that of the righteous is one of life. The life is the Messianic life, something vastly more than mere existence. Death is the opposite of this; it is not loss of existence, but loss of that which makes existence tolerable, yea, possession of that which makes it intolerable.

The kingdom of heaven belongs, in Paul's thought, chiefly to the future. The kingdom of God in the sense of God's reign or dominion is manifested by the true Christian in righteousness, peace, and joy, and in spiritual power (Rom. xiv. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 20). Once he speaks of the actual translation into the kingdom of God's Son as having been already accomplished, but this does not require the present existence of the kingdom on earth (Col. i. 13). The kingdom may still be future and heavenly. We are in it now in spirit; we belong to it because we belong to its King. But in general Paul conceives of the kingdom of God as future. It is to be entered through much tribulation, apparently at the close of the earthly life; during our earthly life we are called into this kingdom, as something future; the kingdom is yet to be inherited; flesh and blood cannot inherit it; the kingdom of Christ, like His Parousia, is future; and Paul believes that he will be saved unto the heavenly kingdom of Christ (Acts xiv. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 1 Cor. vi. 9; xv. 50; 2 Tim. i. 18). Kingdom of God, kingdom of His Son, kingdom of

¹ Heinrici, *Korinthier*, ii. 148, thinks of death as the destruction of the personality.

Christ, and Christ's heavenly kingdom, designate in Paul the glorious abode of God and of redeemed spirits (Acts xiv. 22; Col. i. 13; Eph. v. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 18). It comprehends in itself all that is desired by the Christian. It is the place in which the Father rules, all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24-28). It is variously designated by the apostle as heaven, Paradise, the Jerusalem which is above, and home (2 Cor. xii. 4; Phil. iii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 8; Gal. iv. 26). Of the location of this heavenly kingdom Paul gives no information, except the statement that it is *above* us. It seems probable that Paul shared the common Jewish view of a number of heavens. He refers once to the third heaven, and to a region still higher, which he calls Paradise (2 Cor. xii. 2, 4). But he attempts no description of these regions. There is no trace of the fanciful and extravagant teaching of the Jewish theology with which the apostle was doubtless well acquainted.¹

The life of the redeemed in this heavenly kingdom is characterized by the apostle in a few pregnant conceptions. We may almost say that his characterization of the blessed life is summed up in the one word *Christ*. As the centre of the earthly life and experience of the believer is the personal Christ, so in the life of the spirit in the heavenly kingdom Christ will continue to be the central fact. Christ is the centre of Paul's theology, He is the centre also of his heaven. With Him the redeemed will enjoy eternal fellowship. In his first Epistle the apostle spoke of the great consummation and comfort of the future as being ever with the Lord; and in his last Letter he briefly describes the lot of the blessed as living and reigning with Christ (1 Thess.

¹ Weber, *Lehren des Talmuds*, pp. 197, 331-333.

iv. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 11-12). The life of the future is to be *with Him* (1 Thess. v. 10). The home of the future is made by His presence (2 Cor. v. 8). The bliss of the future is being in His fellowship (Phil. i. 23).

Equally emphasized in the Pauline Epistles is the thought that the redeemed share in the glory of Christ. This is the comprehensive description of their glory. Paul does not picture in detail the glory of Christ, for which human language would doubtless be entirely inadequate; but he gives the sublimest description of the believer's state of future glory by representing him as a participant in the divine glory of Christ. His body will be conformed to the glorious body of Christ; he will share His glorious throne; he will be manifested with Him in glory, in the sight of a holy universe (Phil. iii. 21; Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Col. iii. 4). It is this reward, which the apostle regards as an eternal weight of glory and an incorruptible crown (2 Cor. iv. 17; 1 Cor. ix. 25).

This fellowship with Christ in His glory involves for Paul the complete liberty and the complete redemption of the spirit. Then shall be realized the liberty of the children of God in its ideal and perfect sense, and the full meaning of adoption will, for the first time, possess the soul (Rom. viii. 21, 23; 2 Tim. ii. 10).

Since all the wicked have been judged and put away, the dawn of the heavenly day is the dawn of a time when God is all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). A kingdom has now been established and perfected in which harmony everywhere reigns. God fills all. The moral universe is become an organism according to God's ideal. And throughout this harmonious organism, and for evermore, every tongue confesses that Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

PART II

THE TEACHING OF THE MINOR WRITERS

CHAPTER I

THE TEACHING OF JAMES

THE central message of the Letter of James is, in general terms, a message concerning certain ethical defects of the readers (i. 19-iv. 17). ^{Introductory.} It is not, however, uniformly negative. The emphasis is sometimes laid on the ethical *duty* which corresponds to the defect (*e.g.* i. 22-27), and then the Letter is more constructive and positive. However, the dominant note is, My brothers, do *not* do this or that.

Before coming to the subject of personal defects, the author speaks of the *trials* to which his readers were exposed, and especially of the blessings and the temptation associated with them (i. 2-18). ^{(1) The blessing of trials.} Among the manifold but undefined trials of the readers we are probably to think of the oppression inflicted by the rich, and of the citing of Christians before the tribunals on account of their religion (ii. 6); also of the blasphemy of Christ's name to which believers were sometimes obliged to listen (ii. 7), and perhaps of the pain occasioned to the faithful by the serious moral imperfections which were found in the churches (*e.g.* i. 26; ii. 2; iii. 1).

The note with which the author introduces the subject of trials, if not distinctively Christian, is most easily understood as the utterance of one who lived in the

fellowship of Jesus. He calls on his readers not simply to endure trials with fortitude, as a Stoic might, but to regard their coming as an occasion of pure joy (*πρόσθετε χαράν*, comp. Rom. v. 3), because they may bear the fruit of patience. Of this virtue his conception is so exalted that he thinks of a man as perfect and entire, in whom its development is complete (i. 4). This is manifestly a rhetorical statement, and is not to be understood as claiming that perfection in patience involves absolute perfection of character throughout. But patience is raised to a lofty plane, and presented as a possession that amply repays the endurance of all trials. It is the highest praise of patience to be found in any New Testament writing, but not too high to have perfect justification in the example of Jesus.

The readers are not thought of as having attained this high virtue, and consequently as having no lack. It is more than likely that they lack wisdom, and perhaps are made conscious of this lack by the trials which they are called to endure. This need, however, will be met if they simply bring it to God in faith (i. 5).

The author employs the term "faith" without qualification. He does not speak of faith in Jesus Christ or of faith, faith in God, but simply of faith. In a single incidentally. instance he couples the word with the name of the Lord Jesus (ii. 1); but Christ is here regarded as the *source*, not the object of faith, and faith is used as a comprehensive designation of the Christian revelation (comp. Heb. xii. 2). But while faith is thus used without an object, it appears that the author thought of it as resting upon God. For, first, when he uses the kindred word *believe*, its object is God (ii. 23); and again it appears from i. 5-6 that to ask in faith is

to ask, believing that *God* will grant our request. Accordingly, faith is confidence in the goodness of God. The author believes in Jesus as Messiah and Lord of glory (i. 1; ii. 1); but when speaking of Christian faith, without qualification, he thinks of faith in God. This is noticeable when compared, for example, with the Fourth Gospel, where the verb "believe" is used absolutely, and where the unexpressed object is invariably Christ.¹ In John, Christian faith is a practical belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, in James it is confidence in God. There is manifestly a difference between the two conceptions, but it is one of emphasis rather than of substance. John's belief in the Messiahship of Jesus involved supreme confidence in God, and James's confidence in God was gained through the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah.

Another blessing to be derived from trials is implied in the paradoxical words to the poor and the rich (i. 9-11). For these words, standing in the midst of the section about trials, are best understood in close connection with trial, though containing no direct reference to it.² The "high estate" of the poor brother is that estate which he achieves through the Christian endurance of trial. In this estate he is to rejoice, not greatly heeding his material poverty. The rich brother in like manner is to rejoice in that he is made "low," that is, in the sight of men, by suffering, whether in person or property, for the sake of his faith (comp. Acts v. 41). For, as a rich man, he has no abiding. Like the poorest of men he, too, shall pass away, as the

¹ Gilbert, *The Revelation of Jesus*, pp. 82-84.

² Mayor regards the verse as contrasted with the specific point of instability in verse 8. Comp. von Soden in the *Hand-Kommentar*.

flower of the grass passes away before the sun and the scorching wind.

It need not be said that the rich man also who has endured trials achieves the high estate in which the poor man is urged to rejoice. But instead of repeating this thought the author holds up that of the vanity and the speedy passing of riches, thus suggesting by contrast that the man who, for the sake of his faith, has lost his perishable riches has gained something imperishable. He no less than the brother of low degree, shall receive the promised crown of life, having endured all trial supported by the love of God (i. 12).

So far the blessing of trials. But as men are imperfect, trials are also temptations, and therefore the author (2) ^{Temp-} turns to this aspect of the subject. He will ^{tation.} have his readers remember that the source of temptation is not in God, but in the human spirit (i. 13-15). It is not unlikely that some of them were saying that, if trials came from God, then from God came also the temptation to sin which was, in a sense, contained in the trial. This, however, is not true, as, first, the very nature of God shows. He cannot be tempted of evil, for then He were not God, and for the same reason He tempts no one to sin. But the solicitation comes from within, from the lust of the heart which allures and seduces. When the will consents to the solicitation of lust, then sin is the result; and the third and last degree in the tragic scale is death. But experience also, as well as the nature of God, should check any tendency to make Him the source of temptation (i. 16-18). We know that every offer of good and every perfect gift¹

¹ Mayor, von Soden, and others suppose this line to be a quotation from some poem.

has come from above, from the Father who is unchangeable in His goodness (comp. Mark x. 18). The chief of these good gifts is our introduction into this glorious new life by the word of truth.

Having thus spoken of trials, the author comes to his main subject, the ethical defects of his readers. And in the first place he cautions them against *hasty speech* and wrath, a readiness to pass angry judgment one upon another (i. 19-21; comp. Matt. vii.). The trials to which they were subjected may have made this a particularly easy failure. It must, however, be overcome, for the divine righteousness, which we as Christians ought to have and manifest in our lives, is not promoted by wrath. Instead of speaking words of uncleanness or malice, the readers should receive the word of the Gospel, should welcome it, that is, to a *complete* dominion over their lives. This word of truth by which they had been brought forth is able to save the soul (i. 18); for it works the righteousness of God.

But this result follows only when the word is transmuted into life (i. 22-27). It is a delusion to suppose that there is saving virtue in *merely listening to the word* (comp. Matt. vii. 21-23; Rom. ii. 13). This was the second ethical defect of the readers. The author reminds them that the mere hearing of the word has no more effect on one's character than a momentary glance into a mirror has upon one's dress. A man's duty is to look, and to continue looking, into the mirror of the perfect law, and at the same time to *do* according to what he sees. The perfect law, which James twice calls a law of liberty,

(3) Ethical defects.

(a) Hastiness in speech.

(b) Hearing, but not doing, the word.

is the law as fulfilled by Jesus, the Gospel as the rule of life (Matt. v. 17).¹

One very special method of *doing* the word is to bridle the tongue (i. 26). Not to do this is to make one's religion vain. The author seems to have been deeply impressed by the teaching of Jesus, that every idle word must be accounted for in the day of judgment (Matt. xii. 36-37). He sums up and concludes his thought on *Hearing* versus *Doing* in a general statement on the acceptable religious life (*θηρησκεία*). It consists in service of the needy and in personal purity. Thus James reduces it, as Jesus did, to the very simplest and most easily intelligible terms. This service of the needy, when one goes to it from a careful looking into the law of liberty, is a service in the love of God and of Christ; and the purity which is cultivated while serving the needy is the opposite of all monkish ideals. Thus the conception which James had of the outward manifestation of religion was a conception that contained the plainest ethical teaching of Jesus.

A third defect among the readers, confined, it may be, to those who had some official or social standing, (c) Class was *class distinctions* (ii. 1-13). This might also be regarded as an illustration of their failure to do the word, of which the author has just spoken. This respect of persons appeared in a striking form in the meetings for worship. Persons in fine clothing were given the good seats, while those in poor garb were told to stand or to sit on the footstools. They who tolerated this discrimination revealed thereby a chasm between their practice and their profession.

¹ Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 360-362; and Weiss, *Biblische Theologie des neuen Testaments*, p. 183.

They showed themselves judges whose thoughts were evil, for they divided men by what was purely external. How different, says the author, is God's treatment of the poor! He chooses them to be rich by faith, and heirs of the kingdom of His promise. He gives them the best He has, not, of course, *because* they are poor, but *in spite* of that fact (comp. 1 Cor. i. 26-29).

Moreover, the reader's discrimination in favor of the rich appears unreasonable in view of the oppression which the rich inflict upon them. They drag them before the tribunals and blaspheme the worthy or beautiful name that has been named over them, probably at baptism. It seems necessary to suppose that the rich who do these deeds are the same class who are mentioned a few verses earlier as coming into the synagogue. For it is incredible that James would have his readers treat coldly the rich who came into their synagogue because certain *other* rich men, outside the synagogue, oppressed them. This would be foreign to his spirit. He believed firmly in judging a man by what he is and what he does, ignoring externals. It would be as manifestly unjust to discriminate against the rich in the synagogue because they are rich, as to favor the poor because they are poor. Therefore, it is necessary to suppose that the same rich man who is given the best seat in the synagogue because of his fine clothes and gold ring is liable to be one of those who oppress the Christians and blaspheme the name of Christ. This, however, is possible only on the supposition that the rich were Jews,¹ unbelieving Jews, and that the converted Jews still met in the synagogue with those who were hostile to Christianity, as was the case

¹ Comp. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, p. cxvi.

for a time in Jerusalem (Acts iii. 1). Accordingly, the tribunals before which the Christians were brought were tribunals of the Jews (comp. Acts vi. 12), and their faith was represented as in some way inimical to that of the fathers.

It has been suggested that the readers had actually justified their treatment of the rich, or were ready to do so, on the ground of the law of love. But the author shows that this apology does not cover the whole case. For if they could appeal to the law of love in support of their treatment of the rich, still the same law would condemn their treatment of the poor. The law, however, is one, and it is fatal to stumble even in a single point in its observance. Therefore, in word and in deed, they should seek to realize their high standard, which is not an outward letter but an inner law, even a law of liberty. Moreover, if their appeal to the law of love is sincere, if their love is spontaneous and free, it will not be hindered in its outgoing by the vile clothing of the poor. It will show its quality here in mercy, and that mercy will secure mercy in the day of judgment.

Another defect among the readers, both religious and ethical, was a tendency to rest satisfied with an *intellectual faith*, that is, to sever faith from life (ii. 14-26). This differs formally rather than vitally from what the author said of *Hearing* versus *Doing*. The positive thought in both sections is that religion must manifest itself in life. But the author's interest now is to destroy a false conception of faith. This false conception is that faith ends in intellectual assent. Of faith as thus understood the author speaks plainly, and says that it cannot save; that it is

(d) Divorce
of faith from
life.

ual faith, that is, to sever faith from life (ii. 14-26). This differs formally rather than vitally from what the author said of *Hearing*

dead and unprofitable ; and that it is no better than the faith of demons. It is a conception of faith which affronts common sense. It is as absurd as it would be to find virtue in one who, having plenty of food and clothes in his house, should say to a brother naked and hungry, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled." Moreover, it would be idle to assume that one man may cultivate faith and another works (ii. 18). For faith, which is itself invisible, cannot be "shown," the fact that it *has been cultivated* cannot be made plain, save through outward manifestations. Hence the author can challenge his readers to show faith apart from works.

He argues further that it is against the plain teaching of the Old Testament to suppose that faith apart from life is saving faith. In the cases of Abraham and Rahab it was acts of obedience which made faith complete and gave it true value in the sight of God. If faith was necessary to the act, so the act was necessary to faith. It follows from this that the moment of justification, according to James, is not at the very beginning of the Christian life. It is not at the time when faith is originated, but when it is shown in actual deed. Here the conception of James departs from that of Paul, but the departure is accounted for by the different aims of the two writers. With Paul, the faith that secures justification is by its very nature a faith that *inevitably* expresses itself in deeds like those of Rahab and Abraham, and therefore he puts the divine recognition of this faith in the instant of its origin. But James, since he has in view unfruitful believers, not unbelieving Jews, lays stress on that quality of faith which Paul takes for granted. He does this by making the divine recognition follow upon the actual manifestation of faith. It is

plain, therefore, that the conception of faith which James had in this passage was not the vital conception of Paul when he said that a man is justified by faith in Jesus. In one case faith is thought of as that which will inevitably produce good works; in the other, this inevitableness is not assumed. Moreover, it will be remembered that the "works" which James has in view are not, as in Paul's famous antithesis, *works of the law*; they are, on the contrary, works that *show faith*. They are works that "complete" faith, the very sort of works that Paul thought of when he spoke of faith as *working* by love.¹

A fifth defect with which James deals is the *ambition to teach* (iii. 1-18). He checks this first by the thought of the teacher's responsibility. His judgment, if he fails, will be heavier than that of other men, because he has a wider influence (comp. Mark xii. 40). Then he checks the ambition to teach by the thought of the difficulty connected with the proper exercise of the teacher's function. All men alike, teachers included, stumble in many points. Not to stumble in word, which is a most necessary virtue in a teacher, is of all things the most difficult. A man who is perfect in this particular is perfect in all.

For the tongue, from which words proceed, has great power. It is to the body what the bridle is to the horse and the rudder to the ship. We can liken the effects which come from it to those which sometimes result from a very small fire. But the tongue is not only powerful; it is also bad, the world of iniquity among our members. It is ignited from the fires of Gehenna. It defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of

¹ Comp. von Soden, *Hand-Kommentar*, p. 156; Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 289-292.

life, the wheel which begins to turn at birth.¹ A signal evidence that Gehenna is the source of its fire is the fact that the tongue is untamable. It is also restless and full of poison, as is proven by its sending forth both blessing and cursing — blessing of the Lord and cursing of the Lord's children. This proceeding is wholly unnatural and monstrous. Here we discover another reason why the author would restrain his readers' ambition to teach. They are not masters of their tongues. They are like fountains that send forth both sweet water and bitter. Their wisdom, therefore, consists not in teaching, but in cultivating a good life (iii. 13-18). There is no glory in teaching when there is jealousy and faction in the heart. Such teaching is simply a lie acted out. It is dispensing a wisdom of earth, not of heaven; of man's sensuous nature, not of his spirit; of demoniac, not divine, origin. The heavenly wisdom is manifested in a good life, and James's description of it is as though drawn from the very life of Jesus. "First pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without doubt, without hypocrisy." This is the wisdom of Jesus, the wisdom of the Beatitudes; and he who is wise and understanding among the readers will cultivate this rather than be ambitious to teach. Since there is jealousy in their hearts, let them seek in particular to make peace, for by this means they will attain the fruit which is righteousness (comp. Mark v. 9).

This thought of heavenly wisdom, and especially of its peaceableness, leads, by way of sad contrast, to the discussion of another ethical defect, namely, *worldliness* or materialism (iv. 1-v. 11). The thought of the writer

¹ Comp. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, pp. 112-114.

may go out beyond the circle of his readers in parts of this section (iv. 13-17; v. 1-6), and may rest especially upon the rich Jews who are not converts to Christianity, but even in that case these paragraphs are not intelligible in a letter to believers unless we assume that the writer saw among them the same materialistic tendency.

The fundamental defect in view throughout the entire section is worldliness. There is an inordinate desire to secure that which will minister to selfish pleasure (iv. 1-4). This leads to wars and fightings, that is, to the worst forms of jealousy and faction (comp. iii. 14), to gross violations of the principle of brotherhood. They kill one another, not literally, but in that they cherish anger and hatred, which contain the potency of actual murder (comp. Matt. v. 21-22). Their prayers for earthly good are vain because they are inspired by selfishness. They are guilty of spiritual adultery (comp. Ps. lxxiii. 27), for they are attached to the world. Or does one suppose that God can jealously desire to have complete control of the spirit within us, and *not* be alienated when this spirit chooses the love of the world?¹ No, the Scripture that teaches this divine jealousy is not vain. And yet, serious as is the condition of the readers, they can find deliverance through humble submission to God (iv. 6-10). This involves opposition to the world, or as the thought is here expressed, opposition to the *devil* (vs. 7), also true sorrow for sin and turning from it (vs. 8).

The desire to get the means for self-gratification leads

¹ The translation of verse 5 is uncertain, and the Scripture which the author had in mind is unknown. Von Soden thinks the reference is to Zech. viii. 2. On the thought, compare Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*.

to extreme jealousy and faction, as the author has already said; but he now makes special reference to one form in which this jealousy expresses itself, namely, injurious speaking one of another (iv. 11-12). He reminds them that to judge a brother is to judge the law, and that thus they attempt to usurp the function which belongs to God, the sole judge. This law which they speak against and judge every time that they judge or speak against a brother, is the law as perfected in the Gospel (comp. i. 25; ii. 12). It is possible that the author thought of some specific saying of Jesus like that in the Sermon on the Mount, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. vii. 1).

The worldly spirit of the readers showed itself also in their planning to get gain (iv. 13-17). In this they gave no thought to the will of the Lord. They counted on the future as though it were unquestionably their domain, and they openly gloried in their proud self-confidence. They belonged to the class which Jesus characterized in the parable of the Rich Fool. The author holds up the folly of their course by reminding them with the Psalmist that they are as a vapor, here for a little and then gone. Moreover, they as Christians *know* the right way. They know that they should take the Lord into all their plans, and that, not doing this, they sin.

Finally, to those in whom this worldly spirit has reached a climax, to those who in their consuming lust for riches have defrauded those who toiled in their fields, to those who have lived in unrestrained self-gratification, and who have persecuted their unresisting righteous brother on account of his righteousness (comp. iv. 4), — to these, whether unbelieving Jews or nominal Chris-

tians, the author addresses awful words of warning (v. 1-6; comp. Matt. vi. 19-20). Their approaching doom appears to him as already realized. He sees their riches corrupted, their garments moth-eaten, their gold and silver rusted, and the rust testifying against them, eating their flesh as fire. The day of judgment will be for them a day of slaughter; and this is the end of worldliness.

But to those who suffer at the hands of these rich and worldly men, to those readers who cherish the Christian life and hope, the author in closing addresses (4) Points touched incidentally. an exhortation to patience (v. 7-11) with various brief directions and words of encouragement (v. 12-20). They are to be patient as toward the oppressors and toward each other, for the coming of the Lord is at hand; and they are to be cheered by the thought of the prophets and their experience of the Lord's mercy. The swearing against which the author felt it necessary to protest may not improbably be connected with the readers' forced appearance before the Jewish tribunals (comp. ii. 6). Prayer is thought of as the antidote for trouble, and praise as the appropriate expression of joy. The treatment of the sick recalls what was done by Jesus and His disciples. The elders are to be called, and are to anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, and to pray over them. The disciples of Jesus when sent out in Galilee had anointed the sick with oil (Mark vi. 13), and Jesus had prayed in connection with some of His miracles (*e.g.* John xi. 41). Thus the practice to which James refers had some apparent ground of justification in the Gospel, but this was *only* apparent. For the healing of sick persons by Jesus and His disciples was a Messianic sign, not a

therapeutic institution. As a sign, it could have no meaning after the resurrection. The conception of James is wholly exceptional in New Testament literature, and the practice to which he refers was probably local and quite temporary.

The Epistle of James has no specific teaching in regard to God or Christ or the future; none regarding the Spirit, the Church, or the sacraments. It is ethical, largely a negative protest against ethical defects, but its message, if stated in positive terms, emphasizes the value of right living. We have seen that its ethical teaching is profoundly Christian,¹ that is to say, it has a vital religious background of confidence in God as known through Jesus Christ. God is the holy Father, unchangeably good, who gives liberally to all who ask in faith, who looks upon a man's *life*, rather than upon his profession and creed. Jesus is the Messiah, the author of the Christian faith, whose word is the law of liberty, and whose future coming is the goal of Christian hope. This is the religious background of the Letter, the author's belief Godward. But the practical expression and test of this belief is a life in which the heavenly wisdom is manifested.

¹ Comp. Bartlet, *The Apostolic Age*, p. 247.

CHAPTER II

THE TEACHING OF PETER (1)

IN its simple religious character 1 Peter is more nearly allied with the Synoptic Gospels than are the Letters of Paul. Its spirit and its language Introductory. echo the Beatitudes of Jesus. Of all canonical writings it makes the most constant reference to the life, the sufferings, the resurrection, and the future revelation of the Lord. It was occasioned by a fiery trial among the readers, and might not inappropriately be called *the Gospel for suffering*. Its tone is warm and intense, because its thought is concrete and personal. It exhorts and testifies with "large, divine, and comfortable words."

In presenting the direct and chief message of the Letter, we have to consider first, *the good estate* of the readers. It is not their fiery trial which is put in the foreground, though this is never absent from the writer's thought, but the foreground is filled with the hope and joy of salvation, which no trial can destroy.

The choice of the readers to a share in the Gospel is dignified and assured by the thought that it was in the foreknowledge of the Father (i. 2). It is manifest also in their sanctification, which is from the Spirit (i. 2). Moreover, this choice was made by the Father with a

view to obedience, that is, acceptance of the Gospel, and the consequent entrance into a covenant with God which is sealed with the blood of Jesus. The prominent thought here, when we have regard to the condition of the readers, may well be that of the strength and security of a covenant which has been sealed with Jesus' blood.

With these preliminary thoughts the writer comes to that fact of history, and the accompanying fact of Christian experience, which stir his soul most deeply, namely, the resurrection of Jesus and the living hope which it begets (i. 3-5). He assumes that his readers, despite all their sufferings, share with him this hope. He speaks of it as an inheritance reserved in heaven, language that reminds one of what his Master had said (comp. Matt. xxv. 34). The fundamental significance of the resurrection in the thought of Peter appears also elsewhere in the Epistle. Thus he tells his readers that God raised Jesus from the dead and gave him glory, *so that* (*ὥστε*) their faith and hope might be in God (i. 21); in other words, the resurrection helped them to have a true faith in God, and so a living hope. Again, it was doubtless the fact of the resurrection which led the writer to call Jesus a *living stone*, even as it is through the ministry of that divine event that we ourselves become living stones, built up into a spiritual humanity (ii. 5). And once more, when he speaks of salvation through water, the antitype of Noah's flood, or through the calling of a good conscience upon God, this saving act rests on the resurrection of Jesus (iii. 21). With the author, therefore, as with Paul, Christian hope, or Christianity itself, rests upon the resurrection of Jesus.

It is, perhaps, due to the *afflictions* of the readers, at

least in part, that the author dwells so much on the *future* good of Christians, and that *hope* is so prominent in his Letter. The Messiah's kingdom is thought of as being preëminently in heaven (i. 4), though Peter never uses the expression "kingdom of heaven," which he had so often heard from the lips of his Master. But as Peter gives less thought than did Jesus to the conception of a *present* kingdom of heaven, so he puts more stress than Jesus on the thought of a future revelation of the Lord (*ἀποκάλυψις*). This is the content of hope. Salvation in its fulness is to be experienced at the time of that revelation (i. 5). New grace will be brought to the believer (i. 13), and with the revelation of the glory of Christ there will be given to the disciple an unfading crown of glory (iv. 13; v. 4). Hope of this revelation is stimulated by the thought, which Peter shared with his age, that the end was at hand (iv. 7). He thought it but "a little while" that his readers would have to suffer (i. 6; v. 10).

While, however, this future revelation of Jesus is constantly looming up before the author, the present estate of the Christian is by no means to be compared to an empty vessel, a merely passive and negative salvation. Thus, for example, the believer *rejoices* in the fact that salvation is ready to be revealed (i. 6), and *rejoices* greatly in the Saviour, though he sees Him not (i. 8).

It may be noticed here that, in Peter's thought, they who believe in Jesus have also a true faith in God (i. 21). Belief in God is doubtless said to be *through* Jesus, because through Him is the revelation of God which leads men to believe. Thus in Peter's thought it is as characteristic of the Christian that he believes in God as that he believes in Jesus. The two objects of faith

are intimately associated, as, indeed, they are in the teaching of Jesus according to the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, the reader, in that he believes in Jesus, receives even now that salvation which is the result of faith (i. 9), not in its full realization (*e.g.* i. 13; v. 10), but in a true and important sense, so that his privilege is higher than that of the prophets (i. 10-12). They *foresaw* only, but did not *possess*, this salvation of the Gospel, which is so wondrous in its nature that angels desire to look into it.

By such thoughts Peter reminds his readers that, though in manifold trials, they have reason to be full of hope and joy.

There is yet another step in his approach to the subject which occasioned his Letter, and that is the general spiritual condition of his readers. He passes from their Christian estate to their fiery trial, ^{(2) Christian growth.} not directly, but by way of exhortation touching the development of the Christian spirit. They have been begotten unto a living hope, and the chief concern now is to live a life which is worthy of that hope. Accordingly, the exhortation of Peter proceeds to mention certain elements of such a life, and, we must suppose, elements which were to him of prime importance. Fundamental here is the culture of hope (i. 13). Steady and sober efforts are needed if they are to perfect this. They must take themselves in hand seriously, as one who is to run a race. Then they are to be holy (i. 14-16), that is, they are to fashion themselves according to the character of Him who called them. They are to live a life of reverent fear, and this in view of the costliness of their redemption (i. 17-21). That by which their deliverance has been effected is nothing less than the blood

of the sinless Christ, whose dignity is heightened by the thought that He was foreknown from eternity, that is, was in the plan of God as the Saviour, though His coming was an event of the recent past. *How* the blood of Christ was the means of redemption, neither this passage nor any other in the Epistle attempts definitely to state. The other references to the death of Jesus are based, like this, on the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah (ii. 24; iii. 18), and like the references which Jesus Himself made to the subject they scarcely go beyond the general truth, that His death was *in our behalf*. The statement that He bore our sins in His body upon the tree, or *unto* the tree (ii. 24), does not necessarily transcend the general thought of an intimate identification of Himself with us in our lost condition. The purpose of His act is twofold,—negatively, that we might die unto sins; and, positively, that we might live unto righteousness. Peter nowhere alludes to an influence of the sacrifice of Christ upon God. Moreover, it is to be noticed, that while the aim of this sacrifice was that we might live unto righteousness, having died unto sins, the passage does not suggest *how* it enables us to accomplish this great end.

Again, in a life that is worthy of the Christian hope, there will be fervent love (i. 22). The apostle is thinking here of the interrelation of believers, and not of their attitude toward the world. The ground of his exhortation is the fact that the word of God, the Gospel through which they have come into a new life, is incorruptible and eternal. A pure and divine cause should have a pure and divine effect. Their love to each other should be worthy of the message of God to them, which is a message of love. And it is implied that this will be

the case as they feed upon the reasonable food of the Gospel (ii. 2). They will grow toward the full realization of salvation, which will surely include fervent love for each other. Or, with change of figure, coming continually to the Lord, who is a living stone, they also as living stones — which they are through contact with Him — should build themselves up into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices. The idea of love is involved in the figure of living stones, which *together* form a spiritual house; but the author has now gone beyond the thought of love to a comprehensive statement of the outflow of the new life. The spiritual sacrifices which are offered to God are left undefined, and therefore in agreement with the context should be taken in the most general sense. The term describes the Godward aspect of the entire life, as the showing forth of the excellences of God in the ninth verse describes the manward aspect of that life.

Moved by this vision of what the people of God are called to be and to do, the writer turns again to practical exhortations, more urgent and specific than those already given. It is plain that he had heard not only of a fiery trial which was among the readers, but of particular moral failures which were really of still greater moment. There had been various sins of sensuality among them (ii. 11-12; iv. 2-4), possibly also of hatred and covetousness (iv. 15). Unbelievers reproached them as evil-doers, and apparently sometimes with good ground (ii. 12). Peter had reason also to insist at some length on the duty of submission to authority as a part of "seemly behavior" (ii. 13-iii. 6). There is to be submission to the civil powers, not necessarily for the sake of aught of good in them, as Paul teaches (comp. Rom.

xiii. 1), but for the sake of the Lord. There is to be submission also within the home, of servants to their masters (ii. 18-25), and of wives to their husbands (iii. 1-6). The example of Christ is here foreshadowed even before it is mentioned, for the point of the exhortation to servants is that they should be patient under *unjust* treatment. This teaching was from Christ and could be enforced best by His example. The thought that they were "called" unto suffering, that consequently they were to expect it and regard it as part of their appointed discipline (comp. Acts xiv. 22), was also from Christ (*e.g.* Matt. x. 16-39; John xvi. 2, 33). When he spoke of a call to suffering, Peter may have had in mind such words of the Lord as that of Matt. x. 25, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more shall they call them of his household." But however that may be, he thinks of the sufferings of Christ as an ethical example. He does not affirm, neither does he deny, that any part of those sufferings is to be excluded from this example. In three relative clauses, apparently parallel one with another, he unfolds the significance of this example of Jesus which the readers are to follow. These clauses affirm that the sufferings of Jesus were the sufferings of one who had lived a sinless life; that they were endured without words of reproach or judgment for those who inflicted them; and that in them He bore the sins of others that others might die to sins. The sinlessness of Jesus may have given to His sufferings a unique value in the mind of Peter, but that is not intimated here. The fact that He did no sin is a fact for the readers to imitate; likewise the fact that He endured *patiently*, committing His cause to the righteous Judge. And finally, as He bore our

sins for our good, so we can bear others' sins for their good. This seems to be the logic of the passage. For it is dominated throughout by the introductory statement, "Christ suffered for you, leaving you an *example*, that ye should follow His steps." It is plain that Peter is concerned with the imitable, not with the inimitable, in the act of Christ.

Submission to authority in the domestic circle is to be illustrated in the relation of wives to their husbands, (iii. 1-6). An incidental argument for this, one that would appeal most strongly to a Christian wife, is the fact that unbelieving husbands may be gained for Christ by the behavior of their wives. And still more significant is the fact that a meek and quiet spirit is of great price in the sight of God. The homes of those whom Peter addressed were threatened not only by lack of chaste behavior on the part of the wives, but also by irrational treatment of the wives by their husbands (iii. 7). Hence the apostle's admonition to the latter. It shows the influence of the new Christian conception, especially in the assertion that wives are joint-heirs with their husbands to the grace of life. If less striking than Paul's declaration that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, still this word of Peter contains the same great truth. Then, with a general exhortation to the readers to be humble and loving (iii. 8-12), the apostle comes to speak more particularly of the sufferings which they endure as Christians.¹

He says at the outset that if the Christianity of the readers is manifest in a zeal for that which is good, no

¹ The sufferings of slaves, spoken of in ii. 18-25, are not attributed to the fact that they are Christians, and therefore are to be regarded as incidental to their state of bondage.

one will harm them (iii. 13); but he hastens to admit the exceptions to this rule, and to deal with these.

(3) The Gospel for suffering. Men *are* called to suffer for righteousness' sake, and to them he first of all repeats the Beatitude of Jesus (iii. 14). It is blessed so to suffer (comp. Matt. v. 10). They are not to fear it, but to prepare for it by enthroning the Messiah in their hearts as Lord (iii. 15). If they do this, they will be minute men, ready to give account of their hope anywhere, and they will have a good conscience (iii. 15-16). Moreover, it is blessed to suffer for well-doing because that puts us into the same class with Jesus (iii. 17-18). We become partakers of His sufferings (iv. 13), that is, of sufferings like His (comp. Gal. vi. 17; Col. i. 24), and so have resting upon us the spirit of glory and of God (iv. 14). By "glory" he does not mean fame in this world, or the praise of men; in its fulness it is the glory that is to be revealed in the future, like that which is now the possession of Christ (i. 21; iv. 13); but possibly the author saw a present foregleam of this glory in the *character* of the sufferers (comp. 2 Cor. iii. 18).

It is better to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing, or it is better to suffer for righteousness' sake, because Christ also died for sins. Here is an appeal to the Lord's example, as in the exhortation to servants (ii. 21). And to heighten the value of this example, the author goes on to speak of its *influence*, first, with reference to the readers, then with reference to imprisoned spirits. With reference to the readers, the death of Jesus had *brought them to God*, not indeed by itself alone, but as accompanied by the resurrection (iii. 21). It seems to be taken for granted that the significance of the death of Jesus was made manifest, or was completed, by the resurrec-

tion. This is, of course, explained by the fact that the resurrection of Jesus was necessary to faith in His Messiahship. It was thus by virtue of the resurrection, that the readers were enabled to call after God with a good conscience, that calling which is the inner reality that accompanies the outward symbolic act of baptism.

With reference to certain imprisoned spirits, also, the death of Jesus was, in Peter's judgment, significant. For, first, His spirit was released by death; His activity did not cease with that event. It was continued *in* spirit, *for* spirits. It was the activity of a herald (*ἐκήρυξεν*), and was doubtless thought of by the apostle as a heralding of the *Gospel* (iv. 6). The result of this activity is not indicated; but there is no ground to suppose that Peter regarded it as in vain. Indeed, since in the entire passage he is describing the great *effect* of the innocent suffering of Jesus, it is rather implied that he did not conceive of this mission to imprisoned spirits as fruitless.

There is no reason apparent why this preaching¹ should be limited to the generation of Noah. We can neither suppose that they alone of all past generations *needed* it, nor that Jesus, after His death more than in His earthly life, was partial in His offer of salvation. It is probable, therefore, that this limitation to the age of Noah was not intended by Peter as a *real* limitation,² but was due to the fact that from the first he had in mind his analogy between the waters of Noah and

¹ It is not plain whether Peter thought of Hades as the scene of this preaching, or thought of some special place of suffering.

² Beyschlag supposes that the generation of Noah were regarded by Peter as the worst sinners of the ancient world, and hence that the preaching of Jesus to them appeared to him to be the extreme of mercy. *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 422.

the water of baptism. The limitation is accordingly formal and literary in character—a view which is favored by the fact that it is omitted in the second reference to the subject (iv. 6). What reality, if any, lies beneath this obscure language of Peter in regard to a preaching by Christ to imprisoned spirits, one need not determine in order to admit the force of his general argument. The one act of Jesus in laying down His life, wholly irrespective of any activity among imprisoned spirits, was manifest even in the time of Peter as an act which was revolutionizing the world. Peter could assuredly appeal to it in support of the statement that it is better to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.

Returning to the historical fact that Christ suffered in the flesh, Peter argues that his readers, if they are to follow Christ's example, must be armed with the same mind, that is, a willingness to suffer for the sins of others in order to do them good (iv. 1). And the argument here is the ethical one, that *freedom* from sin is the correlate of *suffering* for sin (iv. 2). What he desires for his readers is this freedom, this holiness of life, and he regards suffering for sin as a means of securing it. It is plain, of course, that this *moral* result does not follow from the simple fact of *physical* suffering, to whatever degree that may be carried. The "mind" to suffer in the flesh is the mind to suffer *rather than* to sin; it is the mind to suffer for righteousness' sake. One who has thus suffered in the flesh has, relatively speaking, ceased from sin. The readers are suffering as Christians; therefore let them take good heed that the quality of their life is in keeping with the fact of suffering. Their friends and

associates may think it strange — a bit of over-religiousness — if they do not share in their immoralities; but these people must give account to the Judge, and it is implied that they cannot give an account which will save them from condemnation.

Such, in epistolary form, is Peter's application of the Gospel to suffering. It is dominated by the thought of fellowship with Christ. Herein consists its beatitude and its glory. The reality of this fellowship is unquestioned, even as is the believer's participation in the revelation of Christ's glory. Special stress is laid on the ethical significance of fellowship with Christ's sufferings. It is suffering for righteousness' sake, and he who endures it has ceased from sin. The author's tendency to dwell upon holiness of life finds expression in the midst of the thoughts on suffering (iv. 7-11), and again when that subject has been dismissed (v. 1-11). If the occasion of the letter was the fiery trial among the readers, its prominent *aim* was that they might attain a higher Christian life. And this is its concluding note. Above the thought of suffering is that of committing the soul in well-doing unto God (iv. 19). The occurrence of suffering seems to be taken for granted, not only for the readers, but also for others; it is according to God's will (iv. 19; v. 10); but the author dwells especially on the thought of a life which, even by the way of suffering, shall glorify God through Jesus Christ. His exhortation is the exhortation of one who witnessed the sufferings of Christ, a fact which he may mention both to justify his exhortation to well-doing, and to furnish stimulus for its observance (v. 1). "Well-doing," for the shepherds of the flock, is willing, humble service (v. 2-3); and for all it is brotherliness,

trust in God, and watchful resistance to the devil (v. 5-9). The end of striving and suffering is a divine perfection of character (v. 10).

In conclusion, we note two or three points that are quite incidental to the message of the letter, but which, nevertheless, throw light on the author's religious views. Thus in common with the apostolic age, in close dependence on the teaching of Jesus, he speaks of God as the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (i. 3). He makes no allusion to the preëxistence of Christ, or to His human birth. He describes believers as those who call on God as *Father* (i. 17)—a statement that embodies the central truth of the revelation of Jesus. There is only slight reference, in the Epistle, to the Holy Spirit. It is possible, though not at all certain, that He is referred to as the source of holiness in the opening of the letter (i. 2). His agency is associated with the preaching of the Gospel (i. 12), and He is said to rest upon those who bear reproach for the sake of Christ (iv. 14). The spirit of Christ that was in the prophets (i. 11), and that testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, is manifestly quite distinct from Christ, of whom it testified. It is either the Messianic spirit of the prophets themselves, or the Spirit of God. If the latter, He is here called the Spirit of *Christ* because the author thinks of Christ as the one of whom all the Scriptures bear witness. According to this view, the author probably regarded the Old Testament as in some real sense a product of the Spirit of God. The author makes a single reference to what might be called a divine decree. He says that the disobedient who stumble at the word, that is, the word of the Gospel, were thereunto "appointed"

(4) Points of doctrine incidentally touched.

(ἐτέθησαν). But whether he thought of this appointment as conditional or absolute, does not appear. He surely holds men quite responsible for choices good and bad. The Epistle of Peter as compared with Jude has relatively little about angels. The reference is scarcely more than rhetorical, when Peter says that our salvation is so wondrous that angels desire to look into it (i. 12), and again when he says that Christ is exalted above angels, authorities, and powers (iii. 22). He speaks of the devil in language that is personal, as do all the New Testament writings, but then immediately identifies his efforts with those of the men who persecute the readers (v. 8-9). His conception, therefore, may have been parallel to that of the Fourth Gospel, which represents Jesus as identifying the prince of this world with the hostile Jews (John xiv. 30).¹

¹ Comp. *The Revelation of Jesus*, p. 160-161; Weiss, *Biblische Theologie des neuen Testaments*, p. 167.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHING OF PETER (2)

THE Second Letter attributed to Peter may best be considered by itself both in view of the uncertainty of its origin and of its noticeable difference from the First Epistle. Its claim to be the work of the apostle, affirmed by some and denied by more in our time, is a claim hard to establish, and not easy effectually to disprove. Even if written in the second century, its general teaching is intelligible from the standpoint of the close of Peter's life, and its central doctrine—the knowledge of Christ—is directly inspired by the Gospel. Of points which are incidental, some, it is true, seem to carry our thought forward to a time subsequent to Peter's death (*e.g.* iii. 16); and the significance of some of these incidental points differs according as the Letter is ascribed to the apostolic age or to the second century; but the points themselves can be presented while the question of date is held in abeyance.

The Second Epistle of Peter was occasioned by heresy as the First was occasioned by persecution; and the nature of the heresy accounts for the choice of teaching in the Letter and for the relative emphasis laid on various aspects of it. The evil root in the false teachers was the perversion of a Christian doctrine, the doctrine of liberty, and

(1) Life and doctrine of the false teachers.

hence they were in the line of those men to whom Paul refers in his Letter to the Romans (iii. 8; vi. 1). The hard things in Paul's Letters, which these men misinterpreted, were probably his utterances on the subject of grace. They talked of Christian liberty (ii. 19), but what they really had in their hearts was unbridled license. Contempt for authority, even for angelic dignitaries, sprang from this false independence (ii. 10). It opened a wide door also to sins of sensuality, which appear to have been most characteristic of the false teachers (ii. 2-18; iii. 3); and therefore the writer compares them with the angels who sinned, that is, the "sons of God" of Genesis vi., as traditionally interpreted, and compares them also with the generation of Noah and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (ii. 4-8).

Besides the sins of impurity, the author mentions covetousness as belonging to the false teachers (ii. 3, 15), though without indicating how they made merchandise of those whom they enticed; and then he makes special reference to the doctrinal error of denying the Parousia of Christ (iii. 4-13). This denial may have had a real connection with the *life* which the false teachers led. For that life of unrestrained license would tend to make the thought of a future judgment unpalatable; and since judgment was associated with the Parousia of Christ, it was natural that they should deny the Parousia itself. Thus the false teachers, starting from a gross perversion of the doctrine of Christian liberty, became bondservants of corruption, and as regards doctrine they denied the coming of the Lord. Their baneful activity was the occasion of the Letter, and determined its course of thought.

The author does not profess to do more than to call to his readers' remembrance certain truths which they already know (i. 13, 15; iii. 1, 2, 17), and we may infer from this that the substance of his teaching was, or at least was *supposed* to be, the common property of all believers.

The fundamental thought of the Letter is the *knowledge of Christ*, or, what amounts to the same thing, the knowledge of God and of Christ. Thus the greeting implies that grace and peace, which the author wishes his readers to enjoy, are multiplied through the knowledge of God and of Jesus (i. 2), and the parting exhortation is that they should *grow* in the knowledge of the Saviour (iii. 18). All things that pertain to life and godliness have been granted to us through the knowledge of Him who called us (i. 3). This knowledge is the way to their possession. Again, the knowledge of Christ Jesus is the goal toward which one approaches as one cultivates the seven virtues beginning with faith and ending with love (i. 5-8). The Christian life is spoken of as the way of *truth* (ii. 2), and men who are not Christians live in error (ii. 18). Christians escape the defilement of the world through the knowledge of Jesus Christ (ii. 20), or through the knowledge of the way of righteousness (ii. 21). Finally, it is by the development of the soul and life in this knowledge that a Christian makes his calling and election sure (i. 10). Thus it appears that the key-thought of the Letter is the thought of *knowing Christ*.

The knowledge of Christ which Peter has in mind is practical, not theoretical; ethical and religious rather than merely intellectual. The term is used as in the

(2) Central doctrinal thought of the Letter.

Fourth Gospel (*e.g.* John xvii. 3). Its ethical character will plainly appear from a consideration of some of the passages. Thus, when it is said that the knowledge of Christ is the channel of all divine gifts which pertain to life and godliness (i. 3), it is manifest that by knowledge is meant more than a historical acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth. Nothing less than knowledge of Him as personal Saviour will satisfy the requirements of this verse. In like manner the vital, religious character of the knowledge of Christ is apparent from the fact that this knowledge rests on the cultivation of faith and love with the accompanying virtues (i. 5-8). This would not be true of an intellectual acquaintance with a religious standard of life. Such acquaintance might be gained in a large measure without the cultivation of love and faith. Again, to know the way of righteousness, or to have knowledge of the Saviour, necessarily implies an escape from the defilements of the world (ii. 20-21), that is to say, this knowledge involves the will and the affections, since it is only by the enlistment of these that freedom from sin is obtained. Hence, when men choose evil, and give their hearts to ungodliness, they *deny* their Master (ii. 1). Denial of Him and knowledge of Him are alike practical conceptions. It is for this reason that the author, in contending against the false teachers, lays stress on the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge is a perfect antidote for their "destructive heresies" (ii. 1). He can give his readers no higher and more pertinent exhortation than to grow in the knowledge and grace of Christ (iii. 18).

Of this Christ, a knowledge of whom is fundamental, the Letter has little to say. Written to those who already share the author's precious faith (i. 1), it may of

course take for granted an acquaintance with the main facts of the Gospel history and the claims made by Jesus.

(3) *Doctrine of Christ.* The titles of Jesus which the Epistle employs, and the value it attaches to the knowledge of Christ, show that its fundamental conception of Him is not different from that of John or Paul. He is the Messiah (i. 1), beloved Son (i. 17), Lord (i. 2), and Saviour (i. 1). No New Testament writing uses this last title so often as does Second Peter. But by the side of this essential agreement with other writers in regard to Jesus, there are certain peculiarities in the Letter. Thus, while in common with Paul the author thinks of the kingdom of Christ as belonging to the future age (i. 11), in calling this kingdom *eternal* he seems to differ, at least formally, from the apostle to the Gentiles (1 Cor. xv. 24). The stress upon the Parousia in this Letter is accounted for by the denial of that event on the part of the false teachers (iii. 4); but the author indicates that at some former time as well he had made known to the readers "the power and coming" of the Lord (i. 16). It is possible to suppose that these were the two great facts which he had emphasized in his teaching, namely, the present power of Christ as Saviour and His Parousia. Reference to the attribute of power, found only in this Letter, accords well with the claim that the author had indeed been a *witness* of the mighty works of Jesus.

Altogether unique is the use he makes of his vision of the transfiguration, for it is adduced as a proof of his teaching in regard to the power and coming of the Lord. The central event of his experience on the "holy mount" was the testimony of God in regard to Jesus, and not the transfiguration itself. It was honor and

glory that God called Jesus His beloved Son (i. 17; Matt. xvii. 5). The fact that the author had witnessed this divine attestation of the Messiahship of Jesus was regarded by him as an adequate background for his teaching both regarding the power and the coming of the Lord. It was an event of such significance that it made even the word of prophecy "more sure" (i. 19), though the prophets spoke as moved by the Holy Spirit (i. 21).

These are the hints which the Letter contains on the author's conception of Christ, and with these in view we must say that this conception rested wholly on history and experience. It was not speculative or philosophical, as we might expect would have been the case if the Letter had arisen in the second century.

We come now to consider more particularly the attitude of the false teachers toward the Parousia. They mocked at the promise of the Lord's coming, and supported their sceptical view by an appeal to history. The fathers of their generation had fallen asleep, and yet all things continued as they had been from the beginning of creation. The fathers had expected the Parousia within their own day, and their expectation had been put to shame. This fact is not stated, and did not need to be, for every reader knew that the speedy coming of the Lord had been a part of the Christian faith from the beginning. The argument of the mockers is manifest, and is not without a certain force. The expectation of the apostolic age had thus far failed of realization. Paul, for example, when he wrote to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv. 15-17), seems to have anticipated the coming of the Lord within his own lifetime, but his hope was not fulfilled. The false teachers,

however, were at fault in the inference that because the Lord had not yet come, though expected by the fathers, therefore He was not coming *at all*. The writer opposes to their claim of uniformity the fact of the historic flood. This was ample evidence that things had *not* remained unchanged from the creation. In his reference to the flood, the writer appears to have regarded it as universal in its sweep; but the main point of his argument is that the old order of life and society was destroyed by the flood, and that view is supported by the Old Testament account. This was the fact which the mockers wilfully forgot. If they had been mindful of that stupendous cataclysm, they might believe in the occurrence of another equally important. In his description of this approaching event, the writer evidently gives his conception of the Parousia, or at least of that aspect of the Parousia which he considered especially pertinent to present circumstances. This description is peculiar to Second Peter, but may easily have arisen either from Old Testament or from New Testament expressions regarding the coming of God in judgment and the passing of the earth (*e.g.* Is. lxx. 17; lxxi. 15; Matt. v. 18; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 13). It was natural, too, though without parallel in the New Testament, that this destruction of earth and heaven should be associated with the Parousia, for the Parousia is everywhere regarded as terminating the present age. The author then goes on to account for the delay of the Parousia by considering, first, that the Lord does not count time as men do; and, second, by the thought that He delays in mercy, to give all an opportunity to repent (iii. 8-9). He adduces no further argument against the deniers of the Parousia, but affirms his faith

in it, and appeals to it as a motive to holy living on the part of his readers (iii. 10-13). They should not only cultivate godliness in view of this great event of the future; but, in contrast to the mockers, they should long for the coming of the day of God, beyond which lie the new heavens and the new earth. The writer here takes up the vision of Isaiah, and sees in its realization the positive side of the Parousia (Is. lxx. 17). The negative side is judgment and destruction.

Having now considered the proper message of the Letter, we note, in conclusion, certain incidental points that are of doctrinal interest. In the first ⁽⁴⁾ Incidental place, it is said that the call of God ¹ is by or ^{tal points.} through His "glory and virtue" (i. 3). This may differ only in a formal manner from the thought of Paul, that we are called *through the Gospel* (2 Thess. ii. 14), for the author of Second Peter may have seen the glory and virtue of God especially manifest in the Gospel of Jesus. However, it turns our thought directly to the character of God. His glory and virtue, His glorious personality as seen in the works and character of Jesus, — it is this which calls us. And the possibility of our being called — attracted — by the glory and virtue of God, carries with it our ability to become partakers of the divine nature (*θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως*), as the author says that we do through our appropriation of the promises (i. 4). For it is plain that by the word *nature* he means here *character*, since it is set over against the *corruption* that is in the world by lust.

A second point is the reference to the interpretation

¹ The reference of τοῦ καλέσαντος to God is favored by the fact that in 1 Peter and the New Testament in general the call is represented as from God. See 1 Pet. i. 15; ii. 9; v. 10; Rom. viii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 9.

of prophecy (i. 20-21). Peter has just referred to a special prophecy, namely, that which had been made more sure by the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration. We may think here of the Old Testament prophecies in regard to the honor and glory of the Messiah. Now the writer's argument is that in the light of the transfiguration the meaning of these prophecies is plain. In like manner there is no prophecy whatsoever which can be truly interpreted by any "cunning devices" of men. As all prophecy originated with the Spirit of God, so all interpretation must come from Him. "Private" or special interpretation is the opposite of that historical interpretation which the event on the Mount of Transfiguration gave to the prophetic word regarding the Messiah. This interpretation was obtained through a personal witness of the testimony which God bore to Jesus. In this manner, therefore, is every prophecy to be interpreted.

With reference to the origin of prophecy, the argument of the present passage does not justify us in affirming more than this, that the author saw in it a true product of the working of God's Spirit. Certainly his language does not exclude the action of the spirit of man.

And finally we must notice the author's reference to Paul. He appeals to his writings for support of what he has said about the longsuffering of the Lord, appeals both to a particular Letter which Paul had sent to the readers and also to his Letters in general (iii. 15-16). He seems to place these on a level with the Old Testament in the matter of authority, for he says that the ignorant and unsteadfast "wrest" or pervert certain difficult things in Paul as they do also the *other Scrip-*

tures (τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς). The same claim is involved when the author couples with the word of the holy prophets the commandment of Jesus through the *apostles* (iii. 2). This implies that all apostolic teaching claims normative authority, hence, of course, the teaching of Paul; and having said this, the author might class Paul's Letters with the Old Testament writings, as he virtually does in verse 16. However, this mode of speech accords with the thought of the second century rather than with that of the first.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF JUDE

THE short letter that bears the name of Jude is not of great value for the reconstruction of the early Christian faith. Its scope is narrow, for it is chiefly a warning against certain men who perverted the Gospel. It deals only in a general manner with the views or character of these men; its interest is rather to assert their utter unworthiness and to beget in the minds of the readers an abhorrence of them as men on whom a terrible judgment is certain to fall.

The author seems to have been engaged in writing at length on the common salvation (vs. 3), when he was constrained by circumstances unknown to us to put forth this short and sharp Epistle. And yet, though of relatively slight value, it suggests directly or indirectly how its author thought and felt in regard to various points in the new religion.

The message of the Epistle, as has just been indicated, is a condemnation of certain persons who bore the Christian name, but whose lives were in glaring contrast with their profession. In the characterization of these people and their doom there are three points to be considered. First, the author's conception of sacred writings. He draws illustrations from the Old Testament, and also probably from the

(1) Conception of sacred writings.

Assumption of Moses (vs. 9), and certainly from the *Book of Enoch*, not to mention possible traces of other uncanonical writings (vss. 4 and 7). Presumably the church or churches to which he was writing regarded these books highly, for otherwise he would not have cited from them, since he of course wished to carry his readers with him. As these books are not quoted elsewhere in the New Testament, Jude is a witness that in the Church of the first century the boundaries of the Old Testament were not everywhere fixed and uniform.

A second doctrinal characteristic of the Epistle is the prominence of angels. The author, probably with the narrative of Gen. vi. in mind, speaks of ^{(2) Promi-} angels who kept not their own dominion; and ^{nence of} asserts, perhaps influenced thereto by earlier ^{angels.} writings, that these angels are kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day (vs. 6). Of this fate the Old Testament says nothing, nor indeed does it shut us up to the view that the "sons of God" spoken of in Genesis were angels at all. Again, when speaking of the sin of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, the author refers to angels, and thinks of them as having flesh, though of a different sort from the flesh of men (vs. 7). Once more Jude says that the men who have privily crept into the Christian fellowship rail at "dignities" (vs. 8), by which term, as appears from the next verse, he means *angelic* dignities (comp. 2 Pet. ii. 10). This slanderous treatment of angels, just the opposite of the *worship* of angels by certain persons in Colossæ (Col. ii. 18), may have been nothing more than an extreme manifestation of the indifference with which angels were regarded even by Paul.

As an example of proper bearing toward angelic beings, the author cites the legend of Michael and the devil. His argument is that if even an archangel abstained from railing judgment, and that when contending with the devil, much more ought men to abstain from railing at angelic dignities.

Finally, in his citation from *Enoch*, the author refers to the coming of the Lord with myriads of His holy ones, that is, angels. Thus it appears that Jude gave to angels a relatively large place in his thought, in this respect betraying a more decided affinity with Jewish, than with Christian, theology.

In the third place, we notice certain details, incidental in character, which throw some light upon the author's doctrinal position. In common with other (3) Secondary points. writers of the apostolic age, he refers, in the salutation of the Epistle, to the fatherhood of God (vs. 1), thus bearing witness to the impression made by the fundamental revelation of Jesus; and in common with the Pastoral Epistles he speaks of God as the Saviour (vs. 24). God is also the only God and the only sovereign (vs. 4).¹ This emphasis on the strict monotheistic conception accords with the Jewish character of the letter as a whole. In harmony with this character is also the circumstance that in every one of the six references to Jesus He is called *Messiah*, the compound proper name, *Jesus-Messiah*, being invariably used. Jude is in harmony with the Gospels in regarding eternal life as the gift of Jesus, and he agrees with

¹ The reference of *θεοπότης* to God is favored by New Testament usage (2 Pet. ii. 1 being the only exception), also by the use of *μόνος* in verse 24, and by the fact that the denial mentioned in the last clause of verse 4 is evidently a denial in life, and hence not different from that perversion of God's grace which is mentioned earlier in the verse.

the Synoptists in assigning its possession to the future age (vs. 21). In like manner, when he speaks of believers as *kept for Jesus Christ* (vs. 1), an expression not found elsewhere in the New Testament, he seems to imply that the kingdom of Jesus belongs to the future rather than to the present. That future, however, is not thought of as remote. The time in which the author lives is the "last time" of which the apostles had spoken (vs. 18). The idea that believers belong to Jesus, and that they are to contribute forever to His glory, — ideas which seem to be contained in the expression "kept for Jesus Christ," — these are of course deeply embedded in the Gospel.

In conclusion under this head of incidental points, we may say that the Epistle of Jude has a touch of *ecclesiasticism*. Thus the author uses the word *faith* in a sense foreign to the New Testament as a whole (Gal. i. 23, the only exception outside the Pastoral Epistles). It denotes a body of truth, the foundation of doctrine on which believers build. Thus something external takes the place of the internal; the word turns our thought to a writing rather than to an attitude of the spirit. This usage indicates that a new stress was being laid on the acceptance of certain teachings, on the normative value of certain traditions or writings. It was perhaps natural, but certainly unfortunate, that the word which had been used to designate a fundamental spiritual fact came to be applied to something outward and material. However precious that something might be, it was yet far less significant than the earlier meaning of the word *faith*.

Then the statement that this faith was delivered to the saints *once for all*, while doubtless containing a

truth, has furnished an easy starting-point for error. It seems to suggest that the understanding of the Christian faith which "the saints" had was complete and perfect. This has indeed been the belief of the Church through extensive periods of her history, and has of course stood in the way of a progressive apprehension of God's revelation. And, finally, there is at least a mild flavor of militant ecclesiasticism in the thought that the readers were to "contend earnestly" (*ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι*) for this faith, this Church doctrine (vs. 3). It is implied that the contention is to be with the men of whose unworthiness the letter speaks. It is not a contention that the readers are to carry on with themselves, with the evil tendencies of their own hearts, in order that they may not fall into the sin of these men. This is not suggested. It is evil *men*, not primarily evil doctrines, that have come in (vs. 4), and these men are to be opposed in the interest of the true faith. But to contend with corrupt men in regard to the true teaching of the faith, particularly if their defection concerns such a point as proper respect for angels, is a procedure of doubtful worth. It could not be justified from the methods of Jesus.

CHAPTER V

THE TEACHING OF HEBREWS

As a presentation of Christian doctrine the Epistle to the Hebrews is unique both in form and substance. It approaches the modern treatise or lecture more closely than does any other writing of ^{Introductory.} the New Testament. With respect to its content, it may be regarded as an elaborate expansion of the thought of Jesus, that He came to *fulfil* the law, narrowing this thought, however, to one particular element of the Old Dispensation. In the development of his thought, the author is plainly made known as a representative of the Alexandrian method of Scripture interpretation and the Alexandrian philosophy. Hence, for the understanding of the Letter, the writings of Philo¹ and the *Wisdom of Solomon* are of value.

The theme of the Letter, as already suggested, is, in general terms, the superiority of the Christian revelation to that which was made to the fathers; ^{Theme.} stated more precisely, it is the highpriesthood of Jesus. This is discussed in connection with the priesthood of the Old Testament and with constant reference to its bearing on the Christian life. Thus the Letter consists of three lines of thought closely blended

¹ Comp. McGiffert, *A History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, pp. 477-481.

one with the others. The author speaks of the Old Covenant, not for its own sake, but as a background for his thought of Jesus; and what he says of Christian duty and privilege is an inference from what he says of Jesus as the high priest. But this inference, be it observed, is the practical end which is always in view. The furtherance of the readers in the Christian life is the great object of the Letter.

Of the three lines of thought which make up the Letter, the first, both logically and in the order of treatment, I. Of the Old Covenant. is that regarding the Old Covenant. Of this the author has more to say than all other New Testament writers together. His interest is chiefly in the priesthood and the priestly service, for this furnishes the specific background for his thought of Jesus; but there are also some significant facts which bear upon his conception of the Old Testament as a whole. Thus (1) A divine revelation. it is held to be a divine revelation as truly as is that which came through Christ. The same God who has spoken to us in a Son spoke to the fathers in the prophets (i. 1). And in that which He spoke to them there was a Gospel (iv. 2; comp. Gal. iii. 8), a Gospel so efficient that it nourished mighty heroes of faith from the days of Abel down to the latest of the prophets (xi. 4, 32). They were not made *perfect*, even those of them who had the fullest revelation of God, for they did not have the Messiah (xi. 40); but God was not ashamed of them, and they were heirs of the promise and of the heavenly city (xi. 9, 16).

The fact that the author regarded the Old Testament as a divine revelation is somewhat emphasized by his method of citing from it. He does not say with Paul, "It is written," but "God said" or "the Holy Spirit

said" (*e.g.* i. 7; iv. 3). This is the prevailing formula, occurring no less than eight times (i. 7, 8-9, 10-12; xiii. 5; iii. 7; iv. 3, 4; x. 15). Thus he ascribes directly to God what the Old Testament itself directly ascribes to psalmist or prophet. Another circumstance of similar import is that four passages which belong to psalmist or prophet are by him attributed to the Messiah (ii. 12, 13; x. 5-7).

This method of citation, as already suggested, lays a certain stress on the divine element in the Old Testament, but it can neither be regarded as a practical denial of human authorship (*e.g.* ii. 6), nor can it be made to furnish a theory of inspiration. It is quite in harmony with Peter, who says that "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. i. 21). And when he ascribes to the Messiah words which were spoken by Isaiah or an unknown psalmist, his conception appears to have been that of Peter who thought of the prophets as having the spirit of the Messiah (1 Pet. i. 10-11).

But while the author of Hebrews saw in the Old Testament a divine revelation, he regarded this revelation as fractional and imperfect (i. 1). Joshua gave Canaan to the Israelites, but he did not give them rest (iv. 8). The imperfection of the revelation appears especially in what is said of the law in the narrower sense of the word. The chief value of this was like the value of a shadow, which points to a substantial reality somewhere beyond itself (x. 1). In itself the law was weak and unprofitable (*ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές*); it made nothing perfect (vii. 18, 19). Its priests were not appointed with a divine oath (vii. 21). Its high priests had infirmity, and must offer sacrifices

for their own sins (vii. 27-28). Its tabernacle was pitched by man and made with hands (viii. 2; ix. 24). Its gifts and sacrifices were carnal and temporary (ix. 10). The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of heifers could at the most cleanse the flesh (ix. 13); they could not take away sin (x. 4, 11); they could not reach the conscience (ix. 14). The service of the Day of Atonement was only a parable of what should be realized in the time of the Messiah (ix. 9). Moreover, the entire régime of the law was forbidding, as though the awful thunders of Sinai continued to echo through it (xii. 18-21).

The weakness and unprofitableness of the law is not an inference which the author makes from the standpoint of the perfect Christian revelation, but it was felt also in the very times of the Old Testament, and is variously stamped upon its writings. Thus God taught the imperfection of the Old Covenant through Jeremiah (viii. 7-12) — an imperfection consisting in the fact that this covenant was not written on the heart. The same truth is found in a Psalm which the author regards as Messianic, in which it is taught that God has no pleasure in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin (x. 5-7). Then the venerable figure of Melchizedek, priest of God, without father or mother, was a monumental proof that the Levitical priesthood must sometime give place to another, foreshadowed by him (vii. 1-3, 11-12). Finally, the very fact that under the Old Covenant people were obliged to offer sacrifices again and again to the end of life, showed most plainly that they were not made perfect, that they were not cleansed in conscience (x. 1-2).

Thus the author of Hebrews saw in the Old Testa-

ment a revelation that was indeed divine, but by no means final in character, and whose ordinances of sacrifice were relatively weak and unprofitable. He does not, like Paul, speak of the positive service of the law in making men conscious of sin. His end is accomplished when he has shown its weakness.

It will be borne in mind, of course, that the author, when speaking thus of the unprofitableness of the Old Covenant, was not comparing it with any ethnic religion, but with what he believed to be the absolute revelation of God in Christ Jesus.

On the background of this Old Covenant the author of Hebrews describes "the better covenant" which Jesus consecrated (viii. 6). On the background of the Levitical ordinances and priesthood he puts his conception of the earthly and heavenly service of Jesus.

II. Of the better covenant.

He begins with an assertion of the superiority of the Christian revelation to that revelation which God made to the fathers, a superiority that consists in the superiority of the *organ* through which it was given. The revelation comes from the same God; but in one case it comes in the prophets, in the other it is given in a Son (i. 2). Of the character and dignity of this Son, the author speaks in glowing terms at the opening of his Letter. He intimates by the structure of the first two verses that the Son is in some way higher than the prophets, but this superiority is not placed by him in the word *Son* itself (*uiós*),¹ for he calls men also sons of

(1) The exalted character and dignity of the Son through whom this covenant is realized.

¹ The statement of Bruce, who follows Weiss, that calling Christ *the Son* "seems to place Him at once within the sphere of the divine" evidently rests upon the definite article, *the Son*; but the precariousness of this

God (*e.g.* ii. 10). He intimates wherein it consists when he says that God *appointed* the Son to be heir of all things, for this word suggests *office* (comp. Acts xiii. 47), and the entire statement suggests *Messianic* office. The ground of this appointment, as the author suggests a little later, was the historical work of Jesus, His work of redemption (i. 3; comp. ii. 9; v. 9). The author in speaking of the appointment of Jesus probably did not think of an historical event, but rather of a divine purpose. The Son's entrance upon a universal heirship, purposed before of God, was, according to the author, a gradual process (ii. 8). It was not complete when the Epistle was written. But this appointment to be heir of all things distinguished the Son from the prophets and made His function unique. To this supreme destination of the Son the author adds a statement touching His original relation to the material universe. As God purposed that all things should eventually become the Son's, so was it also *through* the Son that He made all; the same conception which we find in John and Paul (John i. 3; Col. i. 16), and similar to Philo's conception of creation through the Logos,¹ though not identical with it. God is creator, but in creating He put forth His energy through the Son. The author does not here intimate more closely his thought of this agency. In another passage he says that all things are *through God* (ii. 10), that is to say, His creative power was not delegated to another (comp. xi. 3). If this be the thought, it is probable that by the agency of the Son

argument is seen from the fact that in the fundamental passage on the relation of Christ to God (i. 2, 5) the article is *not* used, nor, with one exception (i. 8), is it elsewhere used. See Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 440.

¹ *Quod deus sit immutabilis*, 12; *De monarchia*, ii. 5.

in i. 2 the author refers to the conditioning influence which the ideal of the Messianic Son had upon God. This view is at least in accord with the general thought of this chapter in regard to the Son, for it is plain that the author has in mind the Son's relation to the world rather than His relation to God.¹

The next assertion regarding the Son is historical, namely, that He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (vs. 3). The thought of this exaltation, prefigured in the Old Testament (*e.g.* Ps. cx. 1) and predicated of Wisdom in the apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon* (ix. 4), was part of the earliest Christian faith (*e.g.* Rom. viii. 34; Phil. ii. 9). The figure expresses the conception of unique authority, subordinate only to that of God. This position accords with the character and work of the Son, and also with His relation to the universe. For He is a gleam or reflection² of God's glory (*ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης*) and an impress of His substance (*χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως*) (vs. 3). This is of course a description of the historical Jesus, for it is He of whom the author is now speaking, He in whom the final revelation of God was made, who also sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. It is not intended to describe the risen and glorified Lord in distinction from the earthly Jesus. Jesus is said to be a³ reflection or gleam of God's glory. This expression, not found elsewhere in the New Testament, is applied to Wisdom in an apocryphal writing,⁴ and is applied by Philo⁵ to man's spiritual part in relation to the

¹ Comp. von Soden in the *Hand-Kommentar*.

² Comp. Lünemann in Meyer's *Kommentar*.

³ The definite article is inserted in the English of this verse without warrant from the Greek.

⁴ *Wisdom of Solomon*, vii. 25.

⁵ *De officio mundi*, 5.

Logos. The idea, however, is not essentially different from that of Paul when he speaks of the "glory of God" manifest in the "face" of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. iv. 6), or from that of John, who says that he beheld the glory of Jesus—glory as of a father's only begotten (John i. 14). The language refers not to the physical but to the spiritual. It expresses the belief that the glorious character of God was manifest in Jesus Christ. This is also the thought of the following phrase, in which Jesus is called an impress of God's substance. The Greek word rendered *impress* we have taken over into English in the word *character* (*χαρακτήρ*). It is that which is graven with the graving tool, or made by pressure, as the stamp of a signet. Jesus was accordingly the stamp of God impressed upon humanity. They who saw Jesus, that is, the spirit or character of Jesus, saw the very character and spirit of God. This is precisely the conception of the Fourth Gospel, of such words in particular as those of Jesus when He says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

To these exalted terms which relate to the character of Jesus another is added which concerns His relation to the universe. He bears all things by the word of His (*i.e.* God's) power (vs. 3). This appears to be in line with Paul's thought when he says of Christ, that in Him all things hold together (Col. i. 17). Von Soden thinks that the idea of Hebrews may be adequately given in the modern term "life-principle" (*Lebensprincip*). Christ is the active force that sustains and moves the universe by virtue of the word of God's power. This idea is plainly parallel with that of the last verse. God *made* the worlds through the Son; His power also upholds and

moves them through the Son. It is God¹ who creates and God's power that upholds, but not apart from the Son. The mode of this cosmical activity through the Son is not at all indicated. The author touches it here in a single sentence, when he is exalting the dignity of Christ, but he does not again refer to it. He has greater interest in the following statement on the historical work of Christ, for he refers to this repeatedly. Christ sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high *when He had made purification of sins*. This act was the ground of His session at God's right hand (ii. 10; comp. Phil. ii. 9). To this thought of purification the author returns later, but is here concerned chiefly with Christ's exaltation. This is the form in which he gives utterance to his thought of the superiority of the Christian revelation. The exaltation of Christ is super-angelic. By His historical work of redemption He has become as much better than the angels, that is, higher in office and dignity, as His name is more excellent than their name.² This name is the name *Son* in its Old Testament Messianic usage. The name *Son* in and of itself does not distinguish Jesus from men, not to say from angels, for men also are called sons of God (ii. 10). But it is plain from the quotations that the name *Son* as applied to Jesus, and said to be more excellent than the name of angels, has a content that makes it equal to Messiah. Thus the author cites the second Psalm, "Thou art my

¹ To represent Christ as the Creator (so even Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 39) is to make a statement radically different from anything found in the New Testament. The author of Hebrews, like Paul and John, says only *ὁ θεός*. It is God who is everywhere and always Creator.

² Bruce thinks that this subject of Christ's relation to the angels was probably a weariness to the writer, and implies that to him, as to moderns, "the angels were very much a dead theological category."

son, this day have I begotten thee," which the Synoptic Gospels associate with the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. In Samuel, also, which is cited in Hebrews, it is the ideal son, the Messiah, of whom the writer speaks (2 Sam. vii. 14). His other citations do not employ the word *Son*, but they contain predicates of the Messiah. Thus the author quotes Ps. xcvi. 7 to prove that the angels should worship Christ, as the "first-born" of God; he quotes Ps. xlv. 6 to prove that the anointing of Christ is unique; Ps. cii. 25-27 to prove that He is eternal; and he quotes Ps. xc. 1 to prove that Christ's position in glory is higher than that of angels. The simple purpose in all these quotations is to justify the statement of verse 4, that the Son has risen to a position far higher than that of any created beings. We miss the author's evident aim if we attempt to make any of these passages yield a different thought. It is the exalted office and dignity of the Son, not His nature, which the author is here contemplating. His view of the Messianic element of Scripture and his method of interpretation are, as we should expect, those of the ancient synagogue rather than of the modern Church. Thus, for example, we do not at present see a direct Messianic element in Ps. xcvi. 7, or Ps. cii. 25-27. But this is relatively unimportant. The main thought of the author regarding the exaltation of Jesus is truly confirmed by his Old Testament citations as a whole, though the pertinency of some of these is not apparent.

It is of interest, though incidental to the main argument, to see how the author, in common with the forty-fifth Psalm, uses the word *God*.¹ As the psalmist used

¹ The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, from which the author quotes, allows us to take *God* as a nominative, according to which con-

it of the king, so the author applies it to the Messiah (comp. John x. 34-36). It is quite plain that the psalmist used the word by poetic license when he called an earthly king "God," for he recognizes that Jehovah is God even of this king whom he calls "God," and that this earthly ruler to whom he applies the divine name is yet one of a *class*, for he says, "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy *fellows*." It is plain, therefore, that the king is given God's name because he is in a peculiar sense God's representative. In this sense we are to suppose that the author of Hebrews applied the passage to Jesus.

We have now seen how the author, at the beginning of his Epistle, sets forth the exaltation of the Messianic Son of God, and thus confirms his statement that the Christian revelation is superior to that which was made of old unto the fathers.

In the next place, his thought of Jesus centres in His fitness to be a high priest.¹ Thus Jesus is not an angel, but a man, the seed of Abraham (ii. 5, 16). To Him apply the words of the eighth Psalm:—

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him,	(2) The highpriest-
Or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"	hood of
	Jesus.
	(a) Fitted
	by his
	humanity.

But, though a man, all things, according to the same

struction we translate, "Thy throne is God," or, "God is thy throne." But while agreeing with Westcott that the force of the quotation does not lie in the title, but in the description of the Son's office and endowment, I regard the vocative construction of *ὁ θεός* as, on the whole, the more probable. However, the use to which this passage, thus construed, has been put in theology is manifestly without ground. See, as recent illustrations of the theological use, Fairbairn, *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 324; Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*, p. 504.

¹ On the origin of the conception of the Messiah's priesthood, see Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, pp. 294-297.

Psalm, are put in subjection under the Messiah's feet, not yet in reality, but in the purpose of God (ii. 8). This Psalm speaks of man as made lower than the angels for a little while,¹ and we see that realized in the sufferings and death of Jesus. That *little while* was the period of His humiliation, for now, though all things are not yet subjected to Him, He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, far above the angels. He is crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death (ii. 9); and just in order that He might suffer death He partook of flesh and blood (ii. 14). By the suffering of death He was perfected as the leader of salvation, — morally equipped for Messianic functions (ii. 10). On God's part it was fitting (*ἐπρεπεύ*) that He should be perfected thus, inasmuch as Jesus and they who are to be sanctified are of one, that is, of God, and so are brothers (ii. 11).

This point of the Messiah's relationship to men is so important that the author confirms it by several Scripture quotations. Words of the psalmist and of Isaiah, being regarded as Messianic in character, are treated as though spoken by the Messiah Himself (Ps. xxii. 22; Is. viii. 17-18). The psalmist said that he would declare the name of Jehovah to his brethren, and the words of Isaiah in regard to himself and his "children" are applied to the Messiah and His *disciples*.

But the importance of the humanity of Jesus as a preparation for His highpriestly service is not exhausted by the thought that He, as a man, could die for men. It is seen also in the fact that His trial fitted Him to succor

¹ The author cites from the Septuagint. The original has *God* instead of *angels*, and *a little lower* instead of *lower for a little (while)*. We are doubtless to abide by the Hebrew.

those who are tried (ii. 18). He can be touched with a feeling of their infirmities (iv. 15), because in all things He was made like unto His brethren (ii. 17). Thus the fact that Jesus partook of flesh and blood enabled Him to taste death for every man (ii. 9), or to make propitiation for the sins of the people (ii. 17), and so conditioned in a fundamental manner His present and perpetual ministry. The author lays a certain emphasis on the point that the humanity of Jesus was true humanity. He says that He was made like His brethren in *all* things (ii. 17), and that He was tempted in *all* points as we are (iv. 15). But he has nothing to say of the origin of His humanity, whether it was natural or supernatural. His language implies a preëxistence of the Messiah, as when he says that God made the worlds through Him (i. 2), and that it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren (ii. 17),¹ but preëxistence is less fully stated than in the writings of John and Paul. It is here even more in the background and more undefined than there, and yet the underlying conception of the Logos or Messianic ideal was probably the same.

A second element in the preparation of Jesus for highpriestly service was His *divine appointment* to the office. He glorified not Himself to be made a high priest (v. 5). He was not a usurper. But God appointed Him, as is shown by the words of the psalmist : —

“Thou art my son,
This day have I begotten thee.” (Ps. ii. 7.)

And by these words also : —

“Thou art a priest forever,
After the order of Melchizedek.” (Ps. cx. 4.)

¹ Other passages, cited by Beyschlag, are not sufficiently definite, namely, ii. 12, 13; iii. 3; x. 5.

These citations do not bear directly on the *time* of Jesus' installation as high priest, but only on the fact of His appointment. The author may well have agreed with the view in Acts, according to which the psalmist's words "this day" are referred to the resurrection of Jesus (Acts xiii. 33). This interpretation is in line with the teaching that Jesus was *perfected* to serve as high priest by His sufferings and death (ii. 10; v. 9). Therefore the author cannot have put His entrance into the highpriestly office earlier than His resurrection. Thus the earthly life of Jesus, and even His death, are not here regarded as a part of His highpriestly service, but simply as a preparation for it.

This is a very remarkable fact in the author's conception of Jesus, for it transfers His Messianic service from the earthly to the heavenly sphere. It makes the earthly career of Jesus, including His death, preparatory to His great work. For it is quite plain from the Letter to the Hebrews that, for the author, the *great* work of Jesus is His service as high priest in the heavenly tabernacle. Hence we must obviously say that he regarded this highpriestly service of Jesus as being at least the *chief* aim of His Messianic appointment. The burden of the Messianic office is in the ministry of the high priest. At this point his conception manifestly differs widely from that of Paul.

But we are concerned at present simply with the fact of Jesus' appointment to be a high priest. This is found by the author, as we have seen, in the Messianic Psalms. Now the appointment of a man to the office of high priest presupposes that he can bear gently with the ignorant and erring, recognizing his own infirmity (v. 2); and we know from the earthly experience of Jesus that He was

personally qualified for His appointment. This qualification included, as a chief element, the fact that Jesus submitted to death, though earnestly supplicating God for deliverance from it (v. 7). The Lord heard Him because of His true Godly fear (*εὐλάβεια*), but did not deliver Him. Thus, although a Son, He learned obedience to the divine will, and so was perfected to be the captain of salvation to all who obey Him (v. 9). This passage is manifestly based on the history of the scene in Gethsemane, when Jesus prayed repeatedly that the "cup" might pass away from Him, but concluded His petition with words of perfect submission to the Father's will. The author of Hebrews saw from this that Jesus *learned* obedience, by which he does not mean that Jesus passed from a state of disobedience to one of obedience (see iv. 15), but only that He proved Himself obedient in the hour of supreme trial. He knows, then, how to bear gently with the ignorant and the erring.

The passage adduced from Psalm cx., to prove the priestly appointment of Jesus, suggested to the author another feature of His priesthood, on which he dwells with manifest interest. The psalmist spoke of the *order* or line of Melchizedek, but without indicating what he meant by that vague expression. According to the brief notice in Gen. xiv. 18-20, Melchizedek was a Gentile, king of Salem in Canaan, and priest of God Most High. When Abraham returned from his successful pursuit of the four eastern kings, into whose hands Lot had fallen, Melchizedek met him with bread and wine, and blessed him; and Abraham gave to Melchizedek a tenth of all that he had taken. The author of Hebrews apparently seeks to explain the mysterious allusion of the psalmist,

(c) Pre-
figured by
Melchizedek.

and in so doing deals with the historical narrative of Genesis according to the principles of Alexandrian exegesis. First, he calls attention to the significant etymology of the words *Melchizedek* and *Salem*. The former means *king of righteousness*, and the latter means *peace*. Therefore Melchizedek was king of righteousness and peace (viii. 2). Second, he was without father, mother, and genealogy, having neither beginning of life nor end of days. The point here is not that Melchizedek was *actually* without father and mother, and so a supernatural being,¹ possibly an angel, but that the Scripture record *says* nothing of father or mother of Melchizedek.² It is this silence of Scripture that is significant. The author argues that this fact was typical, and that Scripture herein makes Melchizedek like the Son of God (vii. 3). Melchizedek is presented as *eternal*, since Scripture does not narrate his birth or death. Therefore, if he was a priest, as Genesis affirms, he was an eternal priest, that is, of course, in type, not in reality. The basis of this view, namely, the silence of Scripture regarding the genealogy of Melchizedek, has not for the modern Church that appearance of strength which it had for the author of Hebrews, and doubtless for many others in his day.

The paramount dignity of Melchizedek's priesthood is seen in the relation of Melchizedek to Abraham. Even that great patriarch, he from whom Levi and the Levitical priesthood sprang, gave a tithe of the spoil to Melchizedek, and also received from Melchizedek a blessing. This is a clear double proof of Melchizedek's

¹ Comp. Gould, *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, p. 168.

² Philo speaks of Sarah as without mother because her mother is not mentioned in the Bible. See Delitzsch, *Briefe an die Hebräer*, p. 270.

superiority to Abraham, and if to Abraham, then certainly to the Levitical priesthood. Further, the author uses again the silence of Scripture regarding Melchizedek, to prove his superiority to the Levitical priesthood. He says that the priests are mortal, but it is witnessed of Melchizedek that he liveth. The weight of this item in his argument will be judged according as one judges of his principle of interpretation.

The position that the priesthood of Melchizedek was superior to that of Levi leads directly to the thought that this Levitical priesthood must be transient, and that there must be a return to the line of Melchizedek (vii. 11-19). It was necessary that there should be a change of the Levitical priesthood, and so of the law which rests on it, because it did not secure perfection. This failure is not more nearly described here. But the fact of it, and the consequent necessity of a change of the priesthood, is implied in what the Scripture says of a priest after the order of Melchizedek. This foreshadowing is realized in Jesus, for it is plain that He was not after the order of Aaron. He sprang out of Judah, and therefore had no right, according to the law of Moses, to approach the altar in priestly service. And, moreover, in the case of Jesus as also in that of Melchizedek, the priesthood was not conditioned upon a carnal commandment. It was not dependent on descent, or on any external circumstance, and therefore was not mutable; but it was according to the power, inner force, of an indissoluble life (vii. 16). The quotation from Ps. cx. shows that the author, when speaking of indissoluble life, is not giving a *reason* why Jesus was made priest, but is rather characterizing His priesthood as unchangeable (comp. vii. 24). And, moreover, this Psalm with

its outlook upon a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek implies (*γαρ*) the bringing in of a "better hope," and as a preparation for this the disannulling of the law. This hope is better, for it rests on a better covenant (vii. 22) — better inasmuch as Jesus, according to Ps. cx., was made a high priest with a divine oath, which was not an accompaniment of the Levitical priesthood; and inasmuch also as Jesus, in contrast with the Levitical priests, has an unchangeable priesthood (vii. 24). This unchangeable priesthood gives room for unceasing intercession.

Thus the author comes to the work of the heavenly high priest (viii.-x. 18). For, that Jesus who has passed

(3) The high priestly service of Christ. (a) In heaven.

through the heavens and taken His place at the right hand of God *has* a work to do follows from the very fact that He is a high priest (viii. 3-5). He must have something to offer.

And this activity is in *heaven*, for if Jesus were on earth, He would not be a priest at all (viii. 4). There are others who are legally appointed to offer the gifts here (comp. vii. 13-15). Moreover, the fact that what they serve is only a *copy* of the heavenly things,¹ according to the word of the Lord to Moses (Ex. xxv. 40), is itself an argument for the existence of a heavenly priesthood.

To the modern student of the Old Testament these two arguments are quite unequal in value, the second lacking the force that might readily be conceded to the first. For the circumstance that Moses made the tabernacle according to the pattern showed him in the mount, is now taken to mean that he made it according to divine direction. The principles of historical interpre-

¹ Comp. Stanton, *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, pp. 186-187.

tation would not justify one in basing on this simple statement the immense inference that there exists in heaven an actual prototype of the earthly tabernacle, whether material or spiritual, and that in this celestial prototype a service is conducted of which the Mosaic service was a shadow. The present ministry of Jesus in heaven does not rest for the modern Church upon evidence of this character.

Having said that our High Priest has a work in heaven, the author goes on to say that this work is as much better than that of the Levitical priests as the covenant of which Jesus is mediator is better than the Old Covenant (viii. 6). The particular reason of its superiority now in mind is that it has been enacted upon better promises. Wherein the promises of the New Covenant are better than those of the Old, seeing that both are promises of one and the same God, the author does not indicate. We can hardly assume that they are better in the sense that they are more *certain*, for God keeps all His promises alike; or better in the sense that they offer something higher than was offered of old, for the Messiah and His kingdom were promised even to the fathers; but we may regard them as better in that their realization is not wholly postponed to the future, but is largely present (comp. xi. 13).

(b) Basis, a new and better covenant.

Again, the Scripture furnishes proof that this covenant underlying the heavenly ministry of Jesus is better than the old (viii. 7-13). God promised a new covenant through Jeremiah, one that should be written on the heart, and in so doing He made the first covenant obsolete or obsolescent (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). When the author says that Jesus has become the mediator of a

covenant better than the old, it is obvious that he has in mind that heart covenant which is promised in Jeremiah. Gould¹ calls this "the fittest and profoundest statement of the place of Christ's death in redemption to be found in the New Testament."

In presenting the priestly service of Christ, the author first describes the typical service of the Old Covenant (c) Entered (ix. 1-10). This indeed had ordinances of the heavenly divine worship. It had a tabernacle divided by a veil into the Holy Place and the Holy His own blood. of Holies. In the first were the candlestick and the table of shewbread; in the second, the golden altar, the ark of the covenant containing a golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod, and the tables of the covenant, and also the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat. The service of the first tabernacle is constant, and is performed by the priests; that of the second comes on one single day of the year, and is performed by the high priest alone, with the use of blood, which is offered both for himself and the people. This was the centre of the service, but its chief significance was negative, for it indicated that the way into the Holy Place was not yet manifest, that is to say, that people did not have immediate access into the divine presence.

It does not affect the main purport of this passage that some of the details are not in accord with our Old Testament text. Thus, following the Septuagint, the author says that the pot containing manna was *golden*, also that the manna and Aaron's rod were kept in the ark (ix. 4). Then he appears² to put the altar of incense in

¹ *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 166-167.

² In an important sense he might say that this altar *belonged* to the Holy of Holies, while not in it. This *may* be the force of *ἐχουσα* in verse 4.

the Holy of Holies, which is without Old Testament support.

The author's interpretation of the highpriestly ritual, namely, of the fact that the Holy of Holies could be entered by only one person, and by him on only one day in the year, is highly significant. It is a natural thought to one who compares the Christian's privilege of access to God through Jesus with the Old Testament ordinance, and probably originated in such a comparison.

The typical service of the Day of Atonement has its fulfilment in Christ (ix. 11-15). He entered once for all into the Holy Place,¹ and in such a manner that He obtained eternal redemption. His entrance contrasts in two particulars with the entrance of a Levitical high priest into the Holy of Holies. First, it was through a tabernacle greater and more perfect than that of the Old Covenant (ix. 11), — a tabernacle not made with hands, not of this visible material world, but spiritual and heavenly (comp. iv. 14). The old tabernacle was but a copy of this (viii. 5). And, second, the entrance was by means of His own blood (ix. 12), not by means of the blood of bulls and goats (comp. ii. 9, 14; v. 8). The argument advanced in proof that Christ by His entrance into the Holy Place found eternal redemption consists in a comparison. The blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer cleansed the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse the conscience! For Christ, by a spirit essentially eternal,² the spirit of

¹ Philo also speaks of heaven as the Holy of Holies, *De monarchia*, ii. 1.

² I have taken πνεύματος αιώσιου ethically, with Bruce, Rendall, and others. Westcott, Briggs, and von Soden refer these words to the spiritual nature of Christ. Against this view is the fact that there is no αἰῶν in the text.

redeeming love, offered Himself without blemish unto God. Inasmuch as the blood of Jesus cleanses the conscience, He is mediator of a new covenant, as has been said before (vii. 22 ; viii. 6), and the divine purpose of this is that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance (ix. 15). The death of Jesus avails for the redemption of the transgressions, which the first covenant was impotent to remove (comp. Acts xiii. 39). Thus far, it will be noticed, the author has not said *how* the blood of Jesus cleanses the conscience. He has simply affirmed it.

The thought that the new and better covenant came into existence through the death of Jesus is now amplified and confirmed (ix. 16-26). It appears from human relationships that a testament¹ is not of force until the testator dies. This law was illustrated even in God's relation to Israel, for His covenant was sealed with blood. The only death conceivable in connection with that covenant, since God cannot die, was the death of some living creature chosen of God for this purpose. The author manifestly departs here from the general principle which he had enunciated, that the death of the *testator* is necessary to the establishment of a testament ; but the departure is forced by the nature of the case. Moreover, it is qualified by the fact that the Mosaic covenant was at least dedicated with blood, and this blood was used according to divine appointment. This thought is set forth in some detail, and the detail differs not a little from the ordinance described in the Old Testament. Thus, in the original account of the

¹ This meaning of *διαθήκη* is adopted by Lightfoot and Bruce, by Weiss and Briggs. Others, as Westcott and Rendall, take it in the sense of *covenant*, and give varying force to the verb *φέρεσθαι*.

covenant (Ex. xxiv.), no mention is made of calves and goats, but only of oxen; the use of water, scarlet wool, and hyssop does not appear; it is not said that the book was sprinkled, nor the tabernacle with its vessels, neither is it said that *all* the people were sprinkled. Some of these details may have been borrowed from other scenes of dedication, as Lev. viii. and Num. xvi., and others may have come from Jewish tradition. They are of interest as bearing on the author's use of the Old Testament, but are not essential to the argument.

He concludes his reference to the law with a general remark somewhat hyperbolic in character. When he says, it is *almost* true that all things are cleansed with blood according to the law, that word *almost* must not be taken too narrowly. For the law recognized cleansing with water as well as with blood (*e.g.* Ex. xix. 10), and it did not always associate the shedding of blood with the forgiveness of sin (*e.g.* Lev. v. 11-13). The reader of the English Bible is quite liable to suppose that the last statement of verse 22 is an unqualified one, and accordingly that the author affirms the absolute necessity of the shedding of blood in order to the forgiveness of sin, that is, under the law. This reading of the verse, however, does him an injustice. The word which limits the first part of the verse limits also the second (*σχεδόν*). Therefore his statement is that forgiveness, according to the law of Moses, is *almost* always associated with the shedding of blood.

The relation of blood to the establishment of a covenant, illustrated from the Old Testament ordinances, gives place, when the author speaks of Christ, to the consecrating and cleansing virtue of blood, without fur-

ther direct reference to a covenant (ix. 23-26). Thus if the copies of the heavenly things were cleansed (d) Virtue (καθαρίζεσθαι) with blood of calves and goats, of Christ's the heavenly things themselves, that is, the blood. true or greater tabernacle (viii. 2; ix. 11), must be cleansed with better sacrifices, by which he means the one sacrifice of Christ (ix. 26). He justifies the phrase "heavenly things" by the statement that Christ manifestly entered heaven, not an earthly tabernacle (ix. 24); and justifies the phrase "better sacrifices" by the twofold thought that the offering of Christ is an offering of His own blood, and is once for all (ix. 25-26).

The blood of Christ here appears to be regarded as possessing both dedicatory and cleansing virtue, for it is associated with the heavenly tabernacle (ix. 23) and also with sin (ix. 26). It is difficult to suppose that the author thought of the heavenly tabernacle as having been *defiled*, and hence as in need of *cleansing*; and even if we understand his language as referring to a *dedication* by the blood of Christ, we have no data which enable us to get a clear conception of what he meant. We can readily think of heaven as in some sense a *new* heaven after the earthly work of Jesus was accomplished, dedicated by Him as the place where His Messianic kingdom was to be consummated; but we can have no certainty that this was the thought of the author. In the next chapter, he speaks of the dedication of the *way* into the Holy Place (x. 19-20), new and life-giving. This way is through His flesh, which is likened to the curtain before the Holy of Holies; in other words, the *way* is just the way of the offering of Christ. The reference is to a *mode* of salvation, not to a place.

But whatever he may have thought of the relation of the blood of Christ to the heavenly tabernacle, there is no doubt that its chief function in his mind was to put away sin (ix. 26). This is the essential matter. This was accomplished fully and finally by His one offering (ix. 27-28). We can no more think that He should repeatedly die than that men in general should die more than once. True, He shall appear a second time, but it will be "apart from sin." He will not come, as once He came, to remove sin, but to receive those who wait for Him, and bring them to the full attainment of salvation.

For His offering of Himself is indeed all-sufficient (x. 1-18). This is the author's concluding thought in regard to Jesus, not introduced here for the first time (comp. *e.g.* ii. 3; vii. 11, 22; viii. 6), but presented more fully. Such an offering was indeed needful, for the sacrifices of the law could not take away sin. In that case they would have ceased, for the worshippers would have had no more conscience of sins. But the sacrifices of the law could not produce this radical effect, for the law was but a shadow of the good to come, and accordingly its sacrifices—the blood of bulls and goats—could not take away sin. Hence they did not accomplish the will of God. It was the purpose of Christ, manifest to the author from Ps. xl. 6-8, to do that will; and the author probably thought of this doing of God's will as illustrated especially in Christ's offering of Himself. In this way the Lord abolished sacrifices and established God's will, of which fact our own sanctification through Jesus is evidence. The fact, moreover, that Jesus sat down at the right hand of God shows that His sacrifice was an availing one (x. 12). No further offering is

necessary because by this, as the Scriptures witness (x. 16-17), there is remission of sins.

This is the culmination of the author's doctrine of Jesus. He is the divine fulfilment of the Old Testament type, the high priest who has obtained eternal redemption. By His offering made once for all we, too, enter the Holy of Holies, having our consciences cleansed from dead works to serve the living God.

Thus according to the author, the goal contemplated by the Old Covenant and realized through the New is this, that we should come into the Holy of Holies, that is, into close and vital fellowship with God. Here is manifest the immeasurable difference in results between the entrance of our High Priest and the entrance of the Levitical high priest. Our High Priest is a forerunner (*πρόδρομος*), and all who believe in Him enter the same sanctuary which He has entered. This privilege has been secured by the offering of Christ, the shedding of His blood. With reference to God this blood is, first, covenant blood (ix. 20; x. 29); it is the blood of sprinkling by which Jesus becomes the mediator of a covenant (xii. 24). That is to say, God regards it as a seal. It establishes, completes a new covenant with men. But, second, this blood is also a means of propitiation for sin (ii. 17), like the blood which the high priest took into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, but on this aspect of the subject the Epistle has comparatively little to say.

To the author of Hebrews, Jesus is the great high priest in heaven. He makes intercession for all who come to God through Him (vii. 25).¹ We must suppose

¹ Comp. the striking words of Philo, *De rerum sacrarum hærede*, 42, — "This same Logos is continually a suppliant to the immortal God on behalf of the mortal race, which is exposed to affliction and misery."

that he associated this intercession with the blood of Jesus, which, though offered once for all, is surely thought of as possessing perpetual validity. The sacrifice of Christ, or rather the Christ who was made perfect through sacrifice and suffering, constitutes a petition inasmuch as He is a pledge of the triumph of His followers.¹ "In the glorified humanity of the Son of man every true human wish finds perfect and prevailing expression."²

We remark in conclusion upon this line of doctrine, that if the author of Hebrews saw in the priestly service of Jesus His *great* service, as one may infer from the Epistle, then his conception Conclusion. of the work of Christ was narrower than the conception which we find in the teaching of Jesus, for it has no place for the Lord's earthly work. This apparent narrowing of the conception puts a relatively greater emphasis upon the death of Jesus than we find in Paul. The form under which his thought is set forth has marked limitations, as has been pointed out, and his method of interpreting the Old Testament differs widely from that of the modern Church; and yet when we penetrate to his thought of *what* Jesus Christ has done for us, we are on the common ground of the apostles, and in his thought of *how* Jesus has obtained for us eternal redemption we see one of several early conceptions of the death of Jesus, each of which had its own content of truth.

According to the statement of the author, the Epistle to the Hebrews is a *word of exhortation* in regard to the Chris-

¹ Comp. Beyschlag, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 334-335.

² Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 192, 230; comp. also Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 428.

tian life (xiii. 22). This is his practical aim in writing. He speaks of the Old Covenant in order to magnify the New; and he speaks of the New Covenant through Jesus in order to magnify the duties and privileges of the Christian life. His exhortation comes in, not all at once or in a formal way, but from time to time as the course of thought about Jesus furnished suitable occasions. Thus the superiority of the Christian revelation to that which was made to the fathers leads to the thought of the Christian's greater responsibility (ii. 1-4). The failure of Israel to enter into the rest of God gives the text for an exhortation to faith (iv. 1-13). Contemplation of the great work of Christ suggests much that the author would gladly say, but cannot because of the immaturity of his readers; and thus he is brought to an exhortation to Christian progress (vi. 1-3), and to a warning against lapsing into indifference (vi. 4-8). The fact that we have boldness to enter the Holy Place and have a great High Priest over the house of God, gives occasion for words of encouragement and caution (x. 19-31). An exhortation to patience and faith flows naturally out of a review of some of the deeds of faith of men and women who lived in the ancient times (xii. 1-3). And the graciousness of the New Covenant is also a fact that suggests practical lessons for warning and for comfort (xii. 18-24).

The word of exhortation which runs through the Letter to the Hebrews touches many points of Christian belief and conduct, some lightly, others more fully. These we shall now consider, after noting the author's general conception of the Christian life as suggested by incidental references throughout the Epistle. His point of view

III. The
Christian life.
Introductory.

(1) General
conception of
the Christian
life.

is prevailingly that of the future. All the old Jewish ordinances, perhaps also all things earthly and visible, were, in his thought, types of things heavenly. The Christian life is a life unto a glory that lies beyond the bounds of time (ii. 10). To this glory God will bring all the redeemed. This is the hope that is set before us (vi. 18), the better hope whose introduction is set over against the disannulling of the law (vii. 18-19).

Again, the author, in common with other New Testament writers, speaks of Christians as the *consecrated* ones, that is, those who are consecrated to God and Jesus Christ (iii. 1; x. 14; xiii. 12), and as those who partake of a heavenly calling (iii. 1). Together they constitute the house of God (iii. 6; x. 21; comp. 1 Pet. ii. 5). That which has taken place in them individually is described in some detail (vi. 4-5). Thus they have been once for all enlightened, shined upon; that is to say, the truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ has entered into their minds (comp. 2 Cor. iv. 6). This has been once for all (*ἀπαξ*), that is, a radical, genuine enlightenment, making the great crisis of their lives; a real, though of course not a comprehensive, revelation. This is the beginning. In the second place, they have *tasted of the heavenly gift*, but what this gift is the author does not anywhere indicate. He assumes that the readers will know what is the particular gift intended; but as the heavenly gifts are manifold, we cannot be quite sure of his thought. Did he mean the pardon of sin, or the gift of grace, or the Holy Spirit? The connection certainly leads us to think that the author had in mind something characteristic and fundamental, positive rather than negative, comprehensive rather than special. Accordingly, we may think of the gift of *life*,

that which Jesus came to give in abundance (John x. 10). To have tasted this gift is one of the distinguishing marks of the Christian. Then, third, the Christian is one who has become a partaker of the Holy Spirit. This word *partaker* (*μέτοχος*) is a favorite with the author (*e.g.* iii. 1, 14; xii. 8). Thus we are partakers of a heavenly calling, partakers of Christ, and partakers of chastening, as well as partakers of the Holy Spirit. The Epistle has little to say of the Spirit in the Christian life, though this single reference indicates that the author regarded the Spirit's office as fundamental. Finally, it is descriptive of the Christian that he has tasted the good word of God, that is, the Gospel, and tasted also the powers of the coming age. This tasting the good word in distinction from the enlightenment mentioned above which is also through the word or revelation of God, may be limited here to the word regarding the coming age, the word through which the powers of that age affect the soul. Thus according to the author, entrance into the Christian estate has four distinctive marks, — enlightenment, life, Holy Spirit, and appreciation of the coming age, or, as he is addressing Christians, appreciation of the future glory.

From the author's general view of the Christian life we pass to his word of exhortation. The central thought in this is *faith*. This is as distinctly emphasized as is gladness in the Epistle to the Philippians or love in the First Epistle of John. It is the second foundation stone of Christian character (vi. 1). It is that which, both in the saints of the Old Covenant and in the martyrs of the New, is to be imitated by the readers (vi. 12; xiii. 7). It is that the lack of which prevented Israel from entering into the

(2) Of faith.

rest of God (iii. 19). It was faith that in the times past developed the heroic in men and women, and secured witness from God (xi). It is impossible to please Him without faith (xi. 6). Finally, it is faith in God of which we have the perfect example in Jesus (xii. 2).

The author, in common with all New Testament writers, regards faith, first and chiefly, as an ethical attitude of the spirit. It involves an intellectual conviction of the existence of God, and more than this, a conviction that He is in Himself such an one that He rewards those who seek Him (xi. 6). But this intellectual element, though doubtless always implied, does not come to the foreground. This place belongs to the *ethical* side of faith. This is manifest from the fact that the author uses unbelief and disobedience as interchangeable terms (iii. 12; iv. 6). The Israelites failed to enter Canaan because of unbelief, or they failed because of disobedience. If the author did not regard these terms as synonymous, he at least regarded the two states as inseparable. In like manner he puts faith over against a shrinking back (x. 39), which manifestly implies that faith goes forward, or obeys. When he speaks of imitating the faith of the martyrs, it is plain that he thinks of the *expression* of faith. It is *obedience* even to the point of death which he would have his readers imitate. This close association of faith in God with obedience to His will, of unbelief with disobedience, shows that the author had formed his conception in vital sympathy with the teaching of Jesus.

Again, the ethical character of faith is seen in the statement that it is an *assurance* of things hoped for (xi. 1), that is, confidence that we shall yet possess those things. Accordingly, faith in God is confidence in Him,

trust in His goodness. This is its nature, and this is ethical. In the same manner we are to understand the statement that faith is "the test of things not seen," or a proof of the invisible world. The author does not mean that the existence of the unseen world is proven by the fact that men *believe* in its existence. What he means, as appears again and again in the chapter (*e.g.* xi. 2, 4, 5), is that faith is a proof of the invisible world because, when exercised, there is witness borne to it *out* of the invisible world. It might be more exact to say that faith is a *means* of proof, the doorway through which the proof comes; but the language of the Bible is popular rather than scientifically exact. The thought of the author is sufficiently plain from the context.

The *object* of faith, in the Epistle to the Hebrews is God. It is faith toward God (*ἐπὶ θεόν*) which is said to be one of the first principles of Christ. When the author wishes to give personal illustrations of faith, he draws not from Christian, but from Jewish, history (xi); he chooses men and women whose faith was not specifically trust in the Messiah, but trust in God. He never speaks directly of faith in Christ, though the reality of such a faith is taken for granted throughout the entire Epistle. Thus he speaks of our becoming partakers of Christ (iii. 14), of salvation through obedience to Him (v. 9), of waiting for Him (ix. 28), and of looking unto Him, — all of which expressions plainly involve acceptance of His Messiahship, — but he does not, with John and Paul for example, bring out faith in Christ as the distinctive characteristic of Christianity. He would have us look to Jesus as the perfect type and illustration of true faith (xii. 2), in other words, would have us possess a faith like the faith of Jesus Himself. But

this emphasis which the Epistle lays upon faith in God does not imply an undervaluation of trust in Jesus. On the contrary, the Epistle presents Him as worthy of all confidence, and of course assumes that all Christians believe in Him. But the author, when speaking of faith, proceeds at once to its supreme object, and that for Christian as for Jew is God.

Faith in God rests on the revelation of His *goodness*. History and experience teach that He rewards those who seek Him (xi. 6), rewards them with the gift of fellowship with Himself. The culminating proof of His goodness is Jesus (ii. 9). For the grace of God is the only fact that accounts for the blessing which comes through Jesus (comp. John iii. 16). And yet the author of Hebrews does not once use that name of God which Jesus consecrated; he never calls Him *Father*.¹ At the same time it may be noticed that there is a frequent tone of severity in the references to God (*e.g.* iv. 12, 13; vi. 8; x. 31; xii. 29). This may be due in part to the condition of the readers, to their dulness of hearing and liability to fall away (v. ii; vi. 1-8). Moreover, the fact that the author's thought moves so largely within the circle of the priestly ritual may account in a measure for the predominance of what may be called a legal view of God. But after making due allowance for these things, it remains probable that the author of Hebrews was less impressed by the thought of the fatherhood of God than was John or Paul.

Closely associated with faith in respect to the emphasis which it receives is the duty of *holding on*, of patient persistence, in Christian effort. There was a tendency

¹ However, he once speaks of God as being *fatherly* in His dealing with us, xii. 7-9.

among the readers to neglect religious interests (*e.g.* ii. 3; iv. 1; v. 11; x. 25), to disregard fundamental Christian duties (*e.g.* xiii. 1-7). This was greater (3) Of patience. at the time of the composition of the Letter than it had been formerly. The readers had endured a great conflict of suffering, apparently with joy and boldness (x. 32-34); but with the removal of this outward pressure the temptation to indifference and to self-satisfaction had increased. Hence the exhortation, now by words of encouragement, and now by words of warning. The greatness of the Christian salvation, spoken at first by the Lord, and confirmed to the readers by those who had heard the first generation of Christian teachers, this confirmation being accompanied by mighty works, was one ground of earnest persistence (ii. 1-4). Another ground is the fact that only as we hold fast our boldness, and the glorying of our hope, are we the house over which Christ presides, the apostle and high priest of our confession (ii. 1, 6; x. 21), and only thus do we become partakers of Christ (iii. 14), and inheritors of the promise (x. 36). Again, the character and position of our High Priest, the Son of God, who has been crowned with glory and honor (ii. 9; iv. 14), the sympathetic, merciful, perfect High Priest (ii. 17; iv. 15; v. 9), one who has an unchangeable priesthood (vii. 24), and who through His own blood obtained eternal redemption — these are the great facts which are capable of furnishing constant stimulus to persistence in the Christian life. If we consider this Jesus in His character and position, if we look unto Him, the perfect type of faith, who by way of the cross reached the right hand of God (xii. 1-2), we shall be able to run our race with patience. There is also a motive in the faithfulness of God, and in

the fact that the day of the consummation is drawing nigh (x. 23, 25).

This duty of patient persistence is scarcely to be separated from the duty of *progress* in Christian knowledge and character. One who holds fast the ⁽⁴⁾ beginning of his confidence (iii. 14), or holds fast his confession (iv. 14), will make steady progress toward perfection (vi. 1). It is doubtful whether the two things were distinguished in the mind of the author. But in any case he emphasizes the duty of his readers to go forward. And yet they are not brought before us as though belonging to the lowest type of Christian character. The author says not a little in their praise. He is sure that God will not forget their work and the love which they have shown toward His name (vi. 10). He mentions also to their great credit that they had endured persecutions in a noble spirit. They had suffered on their own account, and had suffered because of their Christian sympathy with others who were afflicted (x. 32-34). Persecution does not appear to have gone to the extreme of martyrdom (xii. 4), but surely what they had endured showed some true appreciation of the Christian hope. This, however, does not exempt them from sharp rebuke, or make unnecessary an earnest exhortation to go forward unto perfection. They have been Christians long enough to be teachers, but as a matter of fact they need instruction in the first principles (v. 11-14). He mentions six of these fundamental points, — repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection, and judgment (vi. 1-2). Two of these points, — the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands, — are not found in the teaching of Jesus. Their appearance here by the side of the great doctrines of repent-

ance and faith, of resurrection and judgment, suggests that the author attached more importance to outward rites than did the apostles.

The perfection toward which he would have his readers press is not directly defined. It is that which properly accompanies salvation (vi. 9). It implies a more perfect manifestation of the spirit of love, and a better realization of Christian hope (vi. 11-12; x. 35-36). Doubtless it also implies progress in knowledge. The readers are now in the rudiments; they ought to be teachers (v. 12; comp. Jas. iii. 1).

The author appears to hold that unless his readers go forward, they will fall away from God (vi. 3-4). And they who fall away (*παραπίπτειν*) cannot be renewed unto repentance for the reason that they crucify to themselves the Son of God and openly insult Him (vi. 6). This is strong language. Drifting away from the things of the Gospel (ii. 1), or having an evil heart of unbelief (iii. 12), is surely not the same as crucifying to one's self the Son of God. This seems to mark the extreme of alienation from Christ, — a hostility beyond which it is inconceivable that any one should go. For Jesus is the incarnation of love, and to crucify Him of set purpose one must be the incarnation of hate. Hence, the impossibility of a renewal unto repentance. One who thus crucifies Jesus must expect destruction, as a field which, though wet with frequent rains, produces only thorns and thistles (vi. 7-8).

This passage, then, does not abridge the fatherhood of God and teach that there is any sin which He is unwilling to pardon; it teaches rather that one who, having known Jesus, has crucified Him, is not afterward *capable* of repentance. The statement therefore appears

to be in line with what Jesus said of a sin that hath not forgiveness (Mark iii. 28-29). Here as there, we have a word of warning. The falling away is hypothetical, and is moreover a spiritual fact of which only the supreme Judge can be aware. It lies wholly beyond the range of our knowledge. The Jews who crucified Jesus, and for whom He prayed, had certainly not "fallen away," as this term is used in Hebrews, for they had not been once enlightened, and had not tasted the heavenly gift and become partakers of the Holy Spirit (vi. 4). We cannot say that any Christian has thus fallen away, though the author, rightly or wrongly, regards it as possible. On the other hand, it is not difficult to believe, as a theoretical proposition, that a man who has really known Jesus and has afterward cast off all allegiance to Him, has thereby reached a condition of total insensibility to the divine love.

There is a second passage about falling away whose tone is perhaps even more severe (x. 26-31). If we sin wilfully, the author says, after we have received knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, that is to say, the blood of Jesus will no longer avail for us. It should be noticed that the wilful sin is not a single wilful act but a *habit* (*ἀμαρτανόρτων*). If we sin and continue to sin, and do it willingly (*ἐκούσως*), without inward repugnance or sorrow, then there is nothing for us but judgment. For sinning thus is not different from treading under foot the Son of God, abhorring His blood, and insulting the Spirit of grace. This is surely a sin more heinous than the transgression of the law of Moses. If, then, that deserved death, much more does this. Here the thought appears to be that a certain kind or degree of sin in one who has had the

knowledge of the truth is in itself unpardonable. This thought, as the context suggests, is an inference from the old Mosaic legislation; it could not be derived from the teaching of Jesus. For the Gospel puts no limitation whatever on the divine grace, where there is repentance on man's part. Jesus promises rest to all who come to Him, whatever their past may have been.

The author's word of exhortation on the Christian life does not omit the duty of *hope*. Indeed, this is the rather emphasized by his general conception (5) Of hope. of the Gospel. Thus he even characterizes the Christian dispensation as a "hope," a "better hope," through which we draw nigh unto God (vii. 19). One who thus speaks has a profound sense of the future as compared with the present. How much soever we may realize the meaning of salvation in this life, its true and full meaning will be revealed only in the future. To that future belongs the real good hoped for by the Christian (vi. 18). Christ has perfected forever them that are consecrated (x. 14), not in reality, but potentially. Those who are dedicated to God have in Christ a *means* of perfecting, but that perfecting itself belongs to the future age (ix. 28). There are the abiding possessions (x. 34), the city that hath foundations (xi. 10), the better country (xi. 16), and there are God and the spirits of the just and Jesus (xii. 23). Then salvation will be complete (ix. 28). Therefore our souls should be anchored to those heavenly possessions by hope (vi. 19).

There are minor points in the "word of exhortation" on the Christian life which may be briefly noted in conclusion. Thus the readers had sometimes failed to see the meaning of afflictions, and accordingly had been

discouraged and depressed (xii. 4-13). They should remind themselves that affliction is for chastening, and that chastening is what we should expect from a heavenly Father. Received as from Him, it tends to righteousness. The fact of persecution makes an exhortation to peace especially pertinent, and an exhortation to purity of spirit; for bitterness may easily be the fruit of suffering, also indifference to the claims of religion (xii. 14-17). In the graciousness of the New Covenant we should find a motive to holiness, and to the cultivation of the favor of God (xii. 18-29). The author, in closing, touches upon love and sympathy (xiii. 1-3), sexual purity and freedom from covetousness (xiii. 4-6), regard for departed teachers and obedience to spiritual rulers (xiii. 7, 17). He warns against strange teaching, and by strange teaching he means that in which Jesus Christ is not the centre (xiii. 8-16). Yesterday and to-day He is the same, and will be unto the ages. What He was to the martyrs of the past He is now. The readers, having an altar of their own, whereby the author may perhaps have thought of Golgotha or of the cross, are to keep aloof from Jewish sacrifices. The only sacrifice for Christians to offer is the sacrifice of constant praise to God and of unending service.

(6) Points
touched
incidentally.

PART III
THE TEACHING OF JOHN

SECTION I

THE EPISTLES

THE LIFE OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

UNDER the general head of *the teaching of John*, we shall consider only the Epistles which bear his name and the Apocalypse, for the Fourth Gospel, although it contains an important Johannean element, gives us substantially the thought of Jesus rather than of John, and its content has accordingly been discussed in *The Revelation of Jesus*.¹

I. Walking
in the light.
Introductory.

Moreover the Epistles and the Apocalypse are to be considered separately, and that chiefly because their themes are quite diverse. Their content cannot be discussed under common rubrics without doing violence to the purpose of each writing, and to the proportions of their various moral and religious teachings.

We begin, therefore, with the Epistles of John. In the life of the children of God, which we may regard as the theme of the Epistles, the first duty is that of *walking in the light*.

The sum of the Christian message which the apostle says he has heard from Jesus, and which he declares to his readers, is that *God is light*, pure light, (1) Ground for there is no darkness in Him (1 John i. 5). of the duty.

In this central fact, from which the apostle argues in

¹ Macmillan, 1899.

the following verses, he expresses the burden of the revelation of which he has spoken in the opening paragraph of this Letter (i. 1-4). He there refers to a revelation concerning the word of life, which had been from the beginning of history, and also to that revelation which had fallen within the personal experience of the apostles, in which the life eternal, that had been with the Father, was manifested (comp. John i. 14).

The symbol of light was a favorite with Jesus, according to the narrative of John, whose own use of it may have been determined by that of the Master. On the lips of Jesus it was a comprehensive term, standing for no single idea, as knowledge or holiness, but for several ideas. The symbol gathers into itself all that Jesus meant to claim when He represented Himself as the revealer of the Father. He said that He alone knew the Father, and that He made known the Father's name (John xvii. 25-26). This revelation centred, as we have seen, in the fatherhood of God. The light of Christ, then, was not coldly intellectual; it was rather the warm message of a divine lover. It was a message altogether unique, because it was incorporated in a living person. If this person was holy, then holiness enters as an element into the light of God. If He was self-sacrificing for others' good, even to the bearing of the utmost pain and shame, then love enters as an element into the light of God. If He was truth, the absolute spiritual truth on the questions of life, death, and immortality, then truth enters as an element into the light of God. When, therefore, John sums up his message in the declaration that God is light, he therein affirms that the nature of God is free from everything that defiles; that it is the nature of God to give Himself in love, and

that it is His nature also to reveal truth. But as the seven primary colors are combined in the white light of the sun, so these qualities are inseparably joined in the light of God. It is wholly in keeping with the Fourth Gospel, which represents Christ as the absolute revealer of God, when the First Epistle of John not only declares that God is light, but also says that Christ is the true light (1 John ii. 8 ; comp. Rev. xxi. 23).

The apostle affirms that God is light for a very practical purpose, and not at all as a part of a mere system of truth. He wishes his readers to walk in ^{(2) Meaning} the light, and as they claim to be children of ^{of the duty.} God, he hopes to promote his end by telling them that God, their God, is light (1 John i. 6-7). Fellowship with Him requires us to walk in the light. One who walks in darkness and yet claims this fellowship, lies. John knows only light and darkness, truth and falsehood. Men are either of the world (1 John ii. 16), which lies in the evil one (1 John v. 19), or they are of God (1 John v. 19) and abide in Him (1 John iv. 16). There is no intermediate ground.

Walking in the light is doubtless the apostle's general idea of the Christian life. The subject is not systematically treated, but suggestions are thrown out after the manner of a familiar letter. It is also to be remembered that these suggestions were made for particular readers, were adapted to their peculiar circumstances, and that they are not presented as exhausting the subject. On the significance of the figure of walking in the light it is to be noted, first, that the light in which the Christian should walk is to be the same as that in which God dwells (1 John i. 7). It is to be as manifest that the Christian *walks* in light as that God *dwells* in light. The out-

flow of the Christian's life is to be light, as the outflow of God's life is light. Walking in the light, therefore, is walking in the glory of God. It is manifesting those attributes which make God a God of light. Thus the apostle's ideal of life is the highest conceivable. It is comprehensive, and touches life on all sides. As God is in the light, as Christ walked,—this is the standard. And the apostle does not shrink from its highest heights, but says, "As He (Jesus) laid down His life for us, we ought to *lay down our lives* for the brethren" (1 John iii. 16). Thus he claims for every follower the honor of being judged by the very standard of Christ. Again, walking in the light means in particular loving the brother (1 John ii. 9-10). Hatred of the brother belongs to the darkness. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no stumbling-block in him, that is to say, this love lights his own way so that he can walk without falling, and it also prevents his tripping others.

The "brother" of whom John here speaks is the fellow-disciple, as appears, for example, from 1 John v. 16: "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death." "Brother" in this passage is certainly the Christian brother, for all other men, according to John, lie in the evil one, and are already dead (1 John v. 19; iii. 14). John would not speak of the pardon of certain specific sins for one whose heart was still wholly wrong. Again, this meaning of the word is required by 1 John v. 1-2. In this fundamental passage regarding love it is claimed that if a man truly loves God, he will love those who are begotten of God, that is, God's children. Thus the term "brother," as used here, is defined by the expression "children of God." But

we cannot infer from this restricted use of the word "brother" that John limited Christian love, holding as its proper objects those only who share the Christian faith. For he is writing to Christians, and is considering their relation to each other. He is not discussing their relation to unbelievers.¹

The apostle speaks of two important consequences of walking in the light. The first is Christian fellowship. "If we walk in the light, we have fellowship ^{(3) Consequences.} with each other" (1 John i. 7). This word "fellowship" (*κοινωνία*) is used by the apostle both when his primary reference is to a revelation, and also when the chief reference is to spiritual qualities. Thus he writes his Letter in order that the readers may share in the truth which was revealed in Christ, and which was thus made known to the apostles (1 John i. 3). Again, he speaks of claiming fellowship with God while the life is being lived in darkness (1 John i. 6). Here the chief reference seems to be to *character*, to moral and spiritual attributes. The apostle says in effect that there cannot be personal intercourse with God unless there are common desires and purposes, desires and purposes which a man shares with God.

When the apostle speaks of Christian fellowship as made possible by walking in the light, we are probably to take the word *fellowship* in a broad sense, as covering both the intellectual and the spiritual. There can be no true intercourse in the sphere of the *truth* of the Gospel, on the one hand, unless there is a genuine walking in the light; and, on the other hand, there can be no fellowship in the sphere of the *activities* of the Gospel, unless both parties are walking in the light. Thus he

¹ Comp. Westcott, *The Epistles of John*, p. 55.

makes the whole question of Christian fellowship depend on holy living. He does not go into details, but states the general fact. The language shows what stress John laid on the life, and also what a lofty conception he had of Christian fellowship. He brought every would-be disciple to the test of holy living, appealing to this from the professions of the lips; and declared that this holy living, and by implication *only* this, made Christian fellowship possible.

The second consequence of walking in the light is that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John i. 7). It is plain that the blood of Jesus is here brought into connection with man's *sanctification*, as it is brought by Paul into connection with God's act of justification (*e.g.* Rom. iii. 21-26). For the "us" who are cleansed, John and his readers, are already the children of God (1 John iii. 1), and the present tense of the verb (*καθαριζει*) shows that he has not in mind an act that is done once for all, but rather a process, or an act that is likely to be repeated again and again (*comp.* Rev. vii. 14).

He does not touch on the *way* in which the blood of Jesus cleanses the believer from sin, but it is most noticeable that he regards this as a *consequence* of holy living. It is only walking in the light that brings one within the reach of the *sanctifying* influence of the blood of Jesus. Whatever, then, may be the virtue of the blood of Jesus, as related to the sins of believers, it avails only for those who walk in the light, who are in downright earnest to live holy lives.

On the subject of sin in the Christian life the language of the apostle seems to be self-contradictory. For, on the one hand, he declares that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves (1 John i. 8); and, on

the other hand, he says that whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin (1 John iii. 9; v. 18). The contrast is made even sharper in the following passages: "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar"

(1 John i. 10); and, again, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not" (1 John iii. 6). How does the author justify himself in saying that

II. Sin in
the Christian
life.
(1) The fact.

the Christian sins and yet does *not* sin? The key to the apparent difficulty is found in a suggestion in 1 John iii. 3: "Every one who hath this hope on Him purifieth himself as He is pure." Here it is implied, first, that every Christian has that in him from which he needs to be purified; second, that every Christian is actually purifying himself from sin; and, third, that his ideal is the perfect holiness of Christ. The solution lies in the second point. Every Christian is purifying himself from sin under the inspiration of his Christian hope. This is the steady current of his life. This process is absolutely¹ sure to be going on in a man whose hope is in Christ. There is no sin in Christ, and every Christian knows that He was manifested to take away sins (1 John iii. 5). Therefore he whose hope is on the sinless Christ must purify himself, and does. His eye is on a perfect ideal; his deepest and steadfast purpose is to realize this ideal.

He sins. That is plain to himself and probably to others. And still it can be said that he sins not, for

¹ That sin which is "unto death" (v. 16) does not constitute an exception to the above statement, for since the "brother" who commits it is thought of as beyond the reach of intercessory prayer, he is of course regarded as one who has no hope in Christ. The "seed" of God is not in him now, and it does not appear whether John thought it had ever been in him. Of the nature of the sin which is "unto death" John gives no intimation save this, that he seems to regard it as recognizable by believers.

the general trend of his life is upward, and his inmost purpose is to be good. He is not like a man of the world, sinning in the love of it. With him sin is something incidental and undesired; with the man of the world, it is the rule of life, and in his heart it is beloved. This difference is radical.

John gives as a reason why the Christian does not sin the fact that God's seed (*σπέρμα*) abides in him. He cannot sin because he is begotten of God (1 John iii. 9). In other words, the believer has come to have the spiritual nature or character of God; and since he has this he is fundamentally opposed to sin. When, therefore, he sins, he does that which is contrary to his own new and truest self.

John lays great stress on the thought that the true Christian must and will lead a life of increasing holiness (*e.g.* 1 John i. 7; ii. 1, 4, 6, 29; iii. 3, 6; v. 4).

(2) Provision for the forgiveness of sin.

No indulgence is shown toward sin. It is impossible, therefore, to suppose that his readers would regard the provision for the forgiveness of sin as in any wise lessening their sense of obligation to be holy, for the apostle declares again and again that if one is begotten of God, his inmost self is opposed to sin, even as God is opposed to it. The seed or nature of God is in him. The provision for the removal of sin is presented as a balm for troubled consciences. There were apparently some persons bearing the Christian name who denied that they sinned at all, and who sought to show that, if a man sinned, he thereby forfeited the gracious help of Christ. As against these views the apostle declares that the Christian still sins, but that, even as a sinner, he has the offer of divine help.

The provision for cleansing from sin is presented,

first, in general terms, as consisting in the faithfulness and righteousness of God (1 John i. 9). If there is on the believer's side a confession of his sin instead of a denial of it, then forgiveness and cleansing are pledged by God's faithfulness and righteousness. *How* God is required by His righteous and faithful character to forgive sin in this case, the apostle does not at once indicate, but only affirms that He is required so to do. The passage then involves the necessity of confession, and affirms the certainty and efficiency of the divine aid.

The efficiency is manifest in two particulars. God forgives the specific sins, and more than this, He cleanses from all unrighteousness (1 John i. 7). That is, He takes away from within the man, more and more, the dominion of the principle of unrighteousness.

The provision for cleansing from sin is presented, second, in specific terms. It is said that we have an Advocate (*παράκλητος*) with the Father, Jesus Christ a righteous one, and that He is a propitiation (*ἱλασμός*) for our sins (1 John ii. 1-2). It is implied here, as it is affirmed in the foregoing passage, that forgiveness of sin comes from the Father, and hence that sin is against Him (1 John iii. 4). But here we have the additional information that the Father's forgiveness is in some sense due to the mediation of Jesus the Messiah. He is our *paraclete* with the Father, as the Holy Spirit is said to be the Father's *paraclete* with us (John xiv. 16). To take this word in the Epistle in the technical sense of *advocate* is forbidden by the fact that the Fourth Gospel does not represent the work of the Spirit as being that of an advocate in the legal sense of that term, and also by the fact that Christ describes His own earthly work as that of a *paraclete* (John xiv. 16), though it certainly was not that

of a legal advocate. "Paraclete" must be taken in its more general meaning of *helper*, though the situation in which it is used in the Epistle and in the Gospel suggests that a paraclete was thought of as a *representative* helper, mediating between two parties. In so far the word may be said to be akin to *advocate*.

Christ's qualifications for being our representative helper are in part hinted in the name which is here used, *Jesus Christ*. This affirms at once that He is man, and also that He is the Messiah of God, and hence is such an one as Job longed for when he said:—

"There is no daysman betwixt us,
That might lay his hand upon us *both*." (Job ix. 33.)

Another qualification is *righteousness*. Our Helper does not need the deliverance which we need. He is a righteous one, and this language on the lips of John is not comparative, but superlative. Our Helper is *absolutely* righteous (1 John iii. 5).

Yet another and more prominent qualification is contained in the statement that He is a propitiation for our sins (1 John ii. 2). John does not say here or elsewhere that Jesus *made* propitiation for our sins, but that He *is* such a propitiation. Nor is it said here that His *death* is a propitiation, though this word, as used by John, implies the death of Jesus as a sacrifice; but the significant statement is that Jesus Christ, who evermore liveth, is Himself a propitiation. John uses the word once more (1 John iv. 10), but aside from these instances it is not found in the New Testament.

Now it is manifest, in the first place, that Jesus, according to John, is a propitiation by virtue of the fact that He shed His blood. For in i. 7, which has already

been noticed in another connection, the apostle when speaking as here of the cleansing from sin, says that the *blood* of Jesus cleanses from all sin. Whatever, then, the word involves with reference to God, it is applied to Jesus because He shed His blood. In the second place, it is plain that the propitiation of Christ, just as the blood of Christ in i. 7, is here said to avail for the believer's *sanctification*. The apostle is writing to Christian disciples, not to unbelievers, nor concerning unbelievers; and he is speaking of a *present* need, not of a past event in the disciples' experience. This fact throws light on John's conception of the word "propitiation." The parties in mind, between whom the propitiation is operative, are the Father and His children (1 John iii. 1). The Father is light and is love (1 John i. 5; iv. 8). The children are children not in name merely, but in reality. They are begotten of God (1 John v. 1). Thus it is the Father who is "propitiated," and with reference to the children of His love. Therefore the word "propitiation" did not bring to John's thought any conception of God which would not enter as a harmonious element into His infinite fatherhood. It was not an angry God with feelings of hate and wrath, but an indignant, because holy and loving Father, whom the word brought to mind. If such was John's conception of propitiation with reference to believers, we must suppose, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that it was his view also with reference to unbelievers. That is to say, when he speaks of Christ as the propitiation for the whole world (1 John ii. 2), the word does not involve a different conception of God from that which is brought to mind when he speaks of propitiation with reference to believers.

God is a father even toward the world that lies in sin, and propitiation must be understood in harmony with fatherhood. This removes it very far from the heathen idea of sacrifice.

One of the dominant thoughts in the Letters of John is *love*. The only commandment of Christ which John specifies is the commandment to love the Christian brother (1 John iv. 21; 2 John 5), and the great word in our relation to God, also, is love (1 John iv. 7, 16). John's thought on this subject groups itself around three main points. First, the love of God for man, which is fundamental in the history of love, itself the source of all true love on earth. The contemplation of this fills the apostle with adoring wonder (1 John iii. 1). To this love is due the fact that we are called, and *are*, children of God. The proof of this love is the fact that God sent His only begotten Son into the world in order that we might live through Him, or, as he expresses the aim in the following verse, that Christ might be a propitiation for our sins (1 John iv. 9-10). Of these facts, on their earthward side, John says that he and his fellow-apostles bear witness (1 John iv. 14). They have seen the Son, have heard His words, have witnessed His death, and to them He reveals in His life and death a divine love.

The apostle rises from the affirmation of the love of God to the declaration that God *is* love (1 John iv. 8, 16). This statement, that God is love, is not a definition of the being of God, but rather a description of His character, which is given for its value as a motive in the Christian life. Thus, in the first passage where it occurs, we read: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 John iv. 8). Here John is addressing Christians, and is

seeking to stimulate brotherly love. He points to the character of God. Not to love is to be out of fellowship with Him, for He is love. In the other passage, abiding in love is the central thought. "God is love, and he that abides in love abides in God, and God in Him" (1 John iv. 16). The apostle is aiming at the development of love in his readers rather than at a theological statement. The highest commendation of love of which he can conceive is that it truly describes God Himself; and the strongest motive to its possession is the fact that he who possesses it possesses God. Hence the statement, that God is love, is a figure chosen by the apostle to set forth in the strongest way the truth that God is loving.

This truth was for John a simple conclusion from the mission and work of Jesus. It was an inference regarding the unseen based on the seen. It does not involve more than does the word of Jesus when He says that God so loved the world that He gave His Son in its behalf (John iii. 16).

John's time was apparently not different from the subsequent ages in this particular, that the lives of believers lagged behind their professions. ^{(2) Tests} Therefore we find great stress laid on the ^{of love.} genuineness of love. It is brought to practical tests. Of these there are two, which yet are closely related. First, one must keep Christ's word (1 John ii. 5), or walk according to His commandments (2 John 6), or keep God's commandments (1 John v. 3). This is a repetition of what Jesus had said: "If a man love me, he will keep my word. . . . He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words" (John xiv. 23-24). As for *God's* commandments, they are not different from the word of Christ, for Christ's word is His own, and it is the

Father's also. He spoke only those words which He had heard from the Father (John xvii. 8). These passages then amount to this, that no professed love of God is real unless the Christian is keeping, or earnestly striving to keep, the teaching of Christ. The great principles of this teaching had been made known by the preaching of the apostles and others, and at the time when John wrote his Letter many of the writings of the New Testament, especially the Synoptic Gospels and Paul's Epistles, were in wide circulation. In these the readers had the standard of Christ. Conformity to this was a test of the sincerity of love.

The other test of one's love for God, a test which is still oftener mentioned by John, is a sincere love for the fellow-disciple. We have already seen that the *brother* directly contemplated in the Epistle of John is the *Christian* brother. Now this brother will be loved wherever there is a true love for God. He who loves not the brother is not of *God*, that is, such an one is not His child, has not been begotten of Him (1 John iii. 10). Again, John asks how the love of God dwells in a man who *can* help his brother in material things and yet does not (1 John iii. 17). It is implied that, whatever the tongue may say, this man has not a sincere love for God. The love of Gaius, the recipient of the Third Epistle of John, was not of this sort. He was hospitable toward the brethren, even though they were strangers (3 John 5-6). This was love in deed and in truth.

John used strong language on this subject. He said a man was a liar who claimed to love God and yet hated his brother (1 John iv. 20). Such a man does not love God, and in his heart he *knows* that he does not.

For God is manifested in the Christian brother,¹ and if this visible manifestation of God, though imperfect, does not appeal to a man who claims to love God, then that man does not really love the invisible, unmanifested God. Just as this man knows in his heart that he does not love God, so, John says, if a man is conscious of loving God and of keeping His commandments, he can argue from this that he loves the children of God (1 John v. 2). A Christian can assure himself that he loves his brethren if he feels in his heart that he loves God.

Again, we have the same test of Christian love when John says that every one who loves Him who begat, loves him who is begotten (1 John v. 1). This is stated as a universal law, without exception (1 John iv. 19). Love of the Christian brother is not presented here as a duty, but only as an inevitable *consequence* of loving God. And the underlying ground of this is that God and the believer have the same character. The believer has God's nature; for God's "seed" is in him (1 John iii. 9). To love God and hate the Christian brother would accordingly be an absolute impossibility. Yet John also presents the love of a Christian brother as a *duty*. Thus, having spoken of God's love as manifested in the gift of His Son, he continues, "If God so loved us, we *ought* also to love each other" (1 John iv. 11); and he sets the limit of this love in another passage, when he says that because Jesus laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John iii. 16). By this word he is not urging his readers to die for each

¹ It is of course not to be inferred that the apostle saw *no* manifestation of God in men who were not Christians. On what grounds he would have put the duty of loving these men we cannot say from this Epistle. He has to do here simply with the relation of believers to each other.

other, — we do not know that there was any occasion for them to lay down life in one another's behalf, — but he is urging them to Christlike devotion. These two views of brotherly love, namely, as a duty and as an inevitable consequence of being begotten of God, are not in conflict. The author simply thought of the duty as one which a true Christian was absolutely sure to perform. Exhortation might help him to perform it more and more perfectly, and he needed all motives to aid him in approaching the divine standard; but whatever these motives might be, he was certain to draw nearer and nearer to it if he was indeed begotten of God. Another characteristic of brotherly love is suggested by the difficult passage 1 John ii. 7-8, for the commandment which is here called "old" and "new," but which is not named by the apostle, is most probably to be understood as the commandment of brotherly love, which is the only specific commandment of Christ that is mentioned in the Epistle (1 John iv. 21; comp. iii. 23). John says this commandment is *not* new, and yet that it *is* new. They had had it from the beginning of their Christian life through the preaching of the Gospel, and they have it still. The apostle has no other commandment to write to them, no new commandment in the sense of a different one. And yet he writes the old one as a new one, not because they have failed to receive it and live by it hitherto, but because the darkness is passing, and the genuine light is already shining. The old commandment has a new meaning for the new and changed times.¹ "New occasions teach new duties." John does not define this new meaning, but states only the general truth. This, however, is important, for he

¹ Comp. Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, p. 53.

speaks of it as a sort of *development* of the fundamental commandment which they had received at the beginning. Their apprehension and realization of the commandment of brotherly love is to be in keeping with the progress of the Gospel and the shining of the genuine light. They have realized the truth of the commandment, but not ideally, else there would be no occasion for the apostle to write as he does. There is a new realization of it possible, otherwise it could not be called a new commandment. Herein, then, lies a characteristic of true brotherly love. The commandment which enjoins it must become new to the disciples from time to time; in other words, the love must be a living, growing love. And this development should find its constant motive, as far as the text is concerned, in the shining of the genuine light, and in its increasing triumph over the darkness.¹

Some reflex influences of brotherly love are noted by the apostle. He says that by the exercise of genuine love for the brother we shall know that we are *of the truth* (1 John iii. 19). Again, the consciousness of brotherly love enables us to quiet our hearts in whatever matter they may reprove us (1 John iii. 19-20). John gives as the explanation of this ability the fact that God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Now the fact that God is greater than our heart and knows all things is not in itself a reason why we can persuade, or quiet, our hearts when they reprove us. It might increase our fear. But the statement finds its explanation in connection with the thought of the preceding verse. It is there said, "We

(3) Reflex influences of love.

¹ Comp. the different view of Haupt, *Der Erste Brief des Johannes*, pp. 61-73.

know that we are *of the truth* if we love the brother." Or to take the thought as elsewhere expressed, love of the brother shows that we are begotten of God, that we are His children (1 John iv. 16; v. 1). Since then love of the brother shows an inner kinship between the soul and God, the consciousness of this love amounts to a consciousness of His favor (comp. 1 John iv. 12, 16). This is the truth that is taken for granted in the passage before us. We quiet our heart when it reproves us, because God is greater than our heart and knows all things, *and God and we are bound together by love*. There goes along with the consciousness of brotherly love a sense of deep harmony with God. This being the case, when our heart reproves us, we quiet it before God with the thought that He knows all things. Our hearts know something against us; He, too, knows of this; but He knows also of our brotherly love, which allies us to Him. And so the consciousness of love for our brother helps to preserve us from too great disquietude and anxiety in view of the things in our life that are wrong.

A third reflex influence mentioned by John is that if we love one another the love of God is *perfected* in us (1 John iv. 12). This "love of God" is our love for Him, not His love for us. The trend of the Epistle seems to require this view, for from the beginning it has to do with *genuineness* in religion. A Christian's life must agree with his profession. His love for God must be tested by his practical love for his brother. The theme of the Letter is the perfecting of our love for each other and for God, rather than the perfecting of His love for us.

This is also the keynote of the particular passage in which the words under consideration stand (comp. 1 John

iv. 7). This keynote is, Let us love one another. The apostle says in another passage that if we *hate* our brother, we have *no* love for God. Here we have the opposite statement, that if we truly *love* our brother, our love for God is made perfect. In other words, true love has both an upward and an outward motion, and the two are inseparable. If one ceases, both cease; if one is perfected, both are perfected.

Faith does not hold as large a place in John's Epistles as does spiritual knowledge; and yet it has a place. Faith and spiritual knowledge are closely related in the apostle's thought; but it will be IV. Faith. in the interest of clearness to consider them separately. Faith in the abstract John mentions but once (1 John v. 4); in all other cases the verb *to believe* is used, and as a rule has a personal object.

In speaking of John's conception of the nature of faith, we begin with the verse where he sums up in one all the commandments of God. This one (1) Nature of faith. commandment consists of two parts which he regards as inseparable. "This is the commandment of God that we *believe* on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we *love* each other" (1 John iii. 23). Believing and loving are here commanded, and, therefore, are both regarded as depending, at least in part, on the will. Again, he says that every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God (1 John v. 1). That is to say, this belief of a man shows that the character of God, or His spiritual nature, is in him. In like manner, the author says that every one who does righteousness has been begotten of God (1 John ii. 29). A righteous life is evidence of a Godlike character. John never inverts the order in this sentence, and says that he who

is begotten of God believes that Jesus is the Christ. This would make belief in the Messiahship of Jesus the result of being begotten of God — quite a different thought from that which we actually have in John. The prominent thought would then be in the phrase *begotten of God*, and nothing would be said of the character of faith. This, however, is the very point which John has in mind. He affirms something regarding faith, or regarding the man who has faith. He begins on the human side, and declares that a kinship with God is manifest where a soul holds Jesus as Messiah. Such a soul is a child of God. It is plain, then, that this believing in Jesus as Messiah, while doubtless involving an intellectual element, is regarded rather as moral in character, as an act of the will. This is the same teaching that we find in the words of Jesus.

Because faith is thus eminently an act of the will, a consecration, a devotion, to the Messiah, we can understand why John speaks of it as a *victory* (1 John v. 4). He overcomes the world, who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, because that belief means the acceptance of Him who overcame the world. Just this is the significance of John's statement when he says, "This is the victory which *overcame* (*νικήσασα*) the world, your faith." In this past tense he points back to the victory of Christ (John xvi. 33), and he says, in effect, that the Christian faith of the present shares in that victory. The triumph of this faith, therefore, is a foregone conclusion. It was a historical, unquestionable fact that Christ overcame the world; but that was no more certain than it was that the faith of John's readers would be victorious.

But again, when he declares that their faith is the victory which *overcame* the world, he suggests that the

victorious power of faith consists in the fact that it lays hold on the Victor. He does not suggest that it is a world-conquering force in and of itself irrespective of its object, but it takes the soul into a *fellowship* which from the start means victory. The soul takes Jesus as Messiah, and by that act enspheres itself forever in His conquering might.

John appeals to experience in support of this position. Who, he exclaims, as he surveys in thought the world around him, who is the one that is actually overcoming the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John v. 5)? They who were living holy lives, who were manifesting a divine spirit of love, were those who confessed Jesus as their Messiah, and there were no others.

The particular grounds of faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which John enumerates, doubtless owe their mention to a heresy of the time. There were ⁽²⁾ Grounds persons who, admitting that the Christ was ^{of faith.} baptized, and so *came by water*, denied that He was crucified, or, as John expresses it, that He *came by blood*.¹ That is to say, *Jesus* was crucified, but not *Jesus Christ*. The Christ departed from Jesus before His crucifixion. This heresy, of course, destroyed the unity of Christ's personality, and made the cross of none effect. Jesus was no longer the Messiah, but He and the Messiah had been for a little time in partnership, as it were. It was this heresy which called forth the peculiar statement of 1 John v. 6. He here affirms that Jesus Christ, and not merely Jesus, came by water and by blood. This doctrine he bases

¹ See Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, p. 174; Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, article *Cerinthus*, pp. 447-449.

on the present and perpetual witness of the Spirit. "The Spirit is that which witnesseth, for the Spirit is the truth" (1 John v. 7). Thus he is impelled, as it were, by the very nature of the Spirit, to bear witness, especially in the presence of a denial of the truth concerning Jesus Christ. But John goes farther than the witness of the Spirit. In support of the belief that Jesus is the Christ there are *three* witnesses, and thus the legal rule of evidence is complied with (Dt. xix. 15). These three are the *Spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*. They all tend to establish one end, and they are all represented as present witnesses. In calling the water and the blood living witnesses of the truth that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, we must suppose that John took the *water* and the *blood* in connection with the whole well-known story of Christ's baptism and crucifixion. There was historical evidence that Jesus at His baptism had received the assurance that He was the well-beloved Son of the Father, and had received the Holy Spirit as an equipment for Messianic work. John himself in his Gospel dwells on this historical evidence, as do also the Synoptists. So, again, the *blood* stands for the circle of historical facts connected with the crucifixion. These were well known, and it was necessary only to allude to them. In this manner the water and the blood, the baptism, and the death of Jesus are, through the Spirit, living witnesses to His Messiahship.

This divine testimony has its full force only for those who believe in the Son of God (1 John v. 10). The witness of the Spirit can be possessed, of course, only by one who has the Spirit, and one cannot have the Spirit who has not the Son.

On the other hand, the testimony which God has given concerning His Son is of such sort that not to accept it is to make God a liar. A man is morally bound to accept it, and, therefore, John cannot have supposed that it presented any insuperable intellectual difficulties.

John uses two Greek verbs when speaking of the knowledge of Christians, and uses them with a difference of signification which is in the main clearly marked. Of this difference the English Bible gives no intimation either in the text or in the margin. It uses the word *know* in all cases. But it is plain that John does not employ the two words indiscriminately. One of the two (*εἰδέναι*) he never uses with a personal object. In all the fifteen passages where he employs this verb, we are not required to go beyond the thought of intellectual certainty. Thus the Christian *knows* that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him (1 John iii. 15); he *knows* that Christ was manifested to take away sins (1 John iii. 5); he *knows* that he shall one day be like Christ, for he shall see Him as He is (1 John iii. 2); and he *knows* that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not (1 John v. 18). He has a mental conviction in regard to these things. He may have arrived at this by a process of reasoning, irrespective of revelation, or it may rest distinctly upon the word of God. The verb does not require that the conviction should have been gained in a particular way, and the context makes no suggestion on this point. The one message of the word in this Epistle is to affirm intellectual conviction.

The other verb (*γινώσκειν*) is broader in its usage and in the scope of its meaning. It is sometimes employed in regard to things, as a historical period (1 John ii 18), or

love (1 John iii. 16), or truth (2 John 1); but it is more frequently used with reference to persons. When the Christian's knowledge of God or Christ or the Holy Spirit is in question, this word is *exclusively* used. It involves the mental certainty which is expressed by the other verb, but it involves a great deal more. This will appear if we glance at some of the passages. "Hereby we know that we have *γνωσιν* (*ἐγνώκαμεν*) Him, if we keep His commandments" (1 John ii. 3). Now a knowledge of God which is evidenced by the keeping of His commandments is surely more than a simple conviction of His existence, and a conviction that He possesses certain attributes. Again John says, "He who knows (*γνώσκων*) God hears us" (1 John iv. 6). This *hearing* means giving heed to the apostles' instruction, the chief point in which was that Jesus was the Messiah and Saviour of the world. But this obedience to the apostles' doctrine would not follow from a mere intellectual acquaintance with God. It presupposes belief in God and spiritual acquaintance with Him. Once more, the apostle says that every one who *loves* has been begotten of God and *knows* (*γινώσκει*) Him (1 John iv. 7); and that he who loves not knows (*ἔγνω*) not God (1 John iv. 8). It follows from this language that the apostle means by knowledge of God a knowledge that not only is morally conditioned, but also involves the will. To know God, therefore, is not only to see Him, but also to obey Him. Hence John uses this verb *to know* as covering mental certainty and moral acceptance, perception and allegiance. This is always the case when God or Christ is the object of the verb (*e.g.* 1 John ii. 3; iii. 6), and once at least when the object is truth (2 John 1).

John traces our knowledge of the genuine God to a gift by His Son Jesus Christ, a gift which is termed *understanding* (*διάνοια*) (1 John v. 20). This is not the faculty of reasoning, which man already had by creation, but the power of reasoning *aright* in the sphere of religion. It is impossible moreover to suppose that John thought of this ability as a gift by itself. From the teaching of Jesus, recorded by John in his Gospel, according to which a man begins to know the Father when he accepts Jesus, he must have thought of this understanding as the new working of the mind when it is once in the light and fellowship of Jesus Christ. This *understanding* cannot be separated from the acceptance of Jesus as the Saviour. Further, it is impossible to hold that the author of the Fourth Gospel, to whom we attribute the Epistles under consideration, thought of this understanding which Christ has given as a power of finding out God by reasoning from the general facts of life.¹ For him, God was revealed in Jesus Christ, and the chief object of this new understanding was Jesus Himself. It cannot be affirmed that John even thought of this understanding which Jesus gave as working on other material than the Christ; but if he did, there is no indication that such an idea was in his mind when he wrote the present passage. Christ filled his vision too fully to allow him to dwell on aught else as manifesting God.

It may be noted in connection with this passage that John thought of the knowledge of God as the result of a *process* (*γινώσκωμεν*), and not of a single act. This is not at variance with the view just expressed, that he regarded Christ as the object of the new power of

¹ See Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, p. 186.

understanding, for he regarded Christ as an exhaustless mine of knowledge. He says that his readers already know Him (1 John ii. 13-14), and yet he regards that knowledge as only imperfect. He looks forward to a time when they shall see Him as He is (1 John iii. 2).

Since this Christian knowledge of God involves the will and cannot be gotten as by a mathematical demonstration, the question may arise in any soul, Do I know God? John suggests a practical way in which one can answer this question. Thus if we are conscious of keeping God's commandments, we know hereby that we have known Him indeed (1 John ii. 3). So if one loves his brother, or if one is conscious of hating sin, he may be certain that he knows God (1 John iv. 7; iii. 6). Hence the question must be answered out of the inward consciousness. Do I love my brother? Do I hate sin? Am I striving to keep Christ's commandments? If so, it is no lie when I say that I know God.

This knowledge of God which the disciple possesses makes him unintelligible to the world. As the world knew not Jesus, so it knows not the followers of Jesus (1 John iii. 1). The inward life of the Christian, his motives, his desires, his aims—all these the world does not understand. It cannot see their meaning without having some spiritual apprehension of Christ. The life of Christ and of His disciples is one, and if the world does not discern its meaning in Christ, it cannot discern it in Christ's disciples. So the Christian, as far as his best life is concerned, must be content to be unknown to those who will not accept the Lord Jesus Christ.

The positive tone in the declarations of the entire Epistle is in accord with the author's view of the "anointing oil" which believers have received from

Christ (1 John ii. 27). They do not need an outward teacher, for they have within them one who is teaching them concerning all things, as occasion arises. (3) Christian The anointing oil, or chrism, which the readers had received from Christ, was the Holy Spirit whom Jesus had promised. The choice of this symbol for the Spirit may have been due to a desire to suggest that the readers were *set apart* from the impurity of the anti-christs, for the root of this word denotes separation or consecration.¹

The Spirit with which they are anointed teaches the disciples truthfully concerning *all* things, that is, all that belong to salvation. This expression therefore covers the believer's knowledge of God as well as what we call here Christian convictions. The believer's experimental knowledge implies the activity of the Spirit (1 John iv. 13; iii. 24), and it is implied also in his purely intellectual convictions regarding religion (1 John ii. 20-21).

It is interesting to notice what are the great convictions to which John alludes in his Epistle. They may be grouped as follows: first, those concerning Christ. "We know that the Son of God has come" (1 John v. 20). "Ye know that He was manifested to take away sins" (1 John iii. 5). Second, concerning our Christian state. "We know that we are of God" (1 John v. 19). "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren" (1 John iii. 14). "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John iii. 15). And John writes his Letter that the readers may know that they have eternal life (1 John v. 13). "We know that every one who has been begotten of God sinneth not" (1 John v. 18). "We know that

¹ Comp. Haupt, *Der Erste Brief des Johannes*, pp. 107-109.

we have the requests which we have asked of Him" (1 John v. 15). And, third, concerning our future glory. "We know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2). These convictions are all immediately and intensely practical. It cannot be said that they include all the apostle's religious convictions, but they may be regarded as indicating the temper of his mind and the character of all his teaching. The doctrines of which he writes are certainties. He does not often enter the realm of speculative theology. And they are certainties which vitally affect the daily life of believers. As taught by the Spirit (1 John ii. 27), whose mission is to unfold and impress the meaning of Christ's words, these doctrines are all to be regarded as involved in the teaching of Jesus. But this fact does not imply that there is no progress in Christian doctrine. Indeed, the language of John suggests that there *is* progress. He speaks of the readers as having received (*ἐλάβετε*) the Spirit, that is, at the beginning of their Christian life, and he also represents the Spirit as abiding in them (*μένει*), that is, as teaching them continuously. Neither is there any intimation that this will ever cease to be the case. Hence he thinks of their knowledge as growing from less to more, as being under the law of development; but that development can never go beyond the limits of the wisdom of Jesus Christ. "Every one who goes forward and abides not in the doctrine of Christ has not God" (2 John 9).

VI. The
word.
(1) General
character of
the world.

The word *cosmos* is sometimes used by John, as by Jesus, to designate the physical world, but its prevailing sense is moral. The conceptions of John's Epistle are closely in

line with the words of Jesus found in the Fourth Gospel. The world of unredeemed men is in the power of the evil one. It lies *in* him (1 John v. 19), ensphered, as it were, in his influence. Again, the evil one is said to be *in* the world instead of the world being in him (1 John ii. 14). This incarnation of the evil one is parallel to the indwelling of God in believers, and seems to imply the spiritual character of the evil one.

The world as lying in the evil one is in darkness, for light is from God (1 John i. 5). It does not know whither it goes, and it has no more apprehension of the life of believers than it had of the character of Christ (1 John ii. 11; iii. 1). Its spirit is a spirit of selfishness and lust and all kinds of sin (1 John ii. 9, 16; iii. 8). It is a world of death, and to pass out of it by faith and love is to pass out of death into life (1 John iii. 14). Since the world lies in the evil one, it hates those in whom the Father abides (1 John iii. 13; iv. 4; ii. 16). There is conflict between the world and the disciples of Christ, as is suggested, for example, when John says: "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John iv. 4). There are two opposing hosts, and the invisible leaders are God and the evil one. There is no neutral ground; the love of the world and the love of the Father are mutually and absolutely exclusive (1 John ii. 15).

This conflict is a losing fight for the world. It was virtually decided for all coming time when Christ overcame (1 John v. 4). Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ, and who accordingly accepts Him as personal Saviour and Leader, overcomes the world (1 John v. 5), not, of course, in an outward way, but spiritually, as Christ overcame it (John xvi. 33). And yet John said that the darkness was passing and the light shining

more and more (1 John ii. 8). This does not mean simply that believers remained loyal to Christ, successfully resisting the world, but rather that the principles of the Gospel were making conquests. The Church had been planted throughout Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Greece, and in Rome itself. To that extent the darkness had been dispelled, and there was an outward victory.

John speaks of a special manifestation of the world-spirit in the *antichrists* or *false prophets* (1 John ii. 18; iv. 1), for there can be no doubt that the "false prophets" are to be identified with the "antichrists." The two classes are characterized in the same way. Antichrists and false prophets alike are what they are because they deny that Jesus is the Christ (1 John ii. 22; iv. 3); and it is explicitly said of the false prophets that their spirit is the spirit of the antichrist (1 John iv. 3). So the deceiver of the Second Epistle is said to be the antichrist (2 John 7). We have to do, then, with one and the same class of men under different names.¹

It is to be noticed, first, that the antichrists are apostate Christians. "They went out from us," says the apostle, "but they were not of us" (1 John ii. 19). They had borne the Christian name, and so far as we learn from John, still bore it; but they had gone out from the Church, and had gone into the world (1 John iv. 1; 2 John 7). The fact that they came to believers and tried to deceive them in regard to the incarnation of Christ (1 John ii. 26) favors the view that they still called themselves disciples; for had they utterly abandoned this name, they could

¹ The name "false prophets" may preserve the claim that they made for themselves, that they were indeed prophets; and the name "antichrist" gives the apostle's estimate of them.

scarcely have gotten a hearing from believers. So the fact that they claimed to have *gone forward* (2 John 9) and to have attained a higher truth, is in favor of the view that they continued to claim the name of disciple.

It is to be noticed, second, that John has the conception of a *plurality* of antichrists, and also of *one* antichrist. He says of every individual who denies that Jesus is the Christ, that he is the antichrist (1 John ii. 22); but again he says that such an one has the *spirit* of the antichrist (1 John iv. 3). Here the man and the antichrist are distinct. The man has the antichrist's spirit, but he is not, therefore, identical with the antichrist any more than a man who has the Spirit of God is identical with God. The other passages are to be interpreted in the light of this. The *many* antichrists are men with the spirit of *the* antichrist.

It is to be noticed, third, that the antichrists or false prophets are *of the world* (1 John iv. 5), while Christians are *of God* (1 John iv. 6). To be *of* the world is to belong to it, to be filled and moved by its spirit, and to share its lust (1 John ii. 17). Hence the world hears these false prophets. Now the spirit of the world is none other than the spirit of the evil one. It is the devil, or the spirit of error (1 John iv. 6). This is the one in whom the world lies ensphered (1 John v. 19). The false prophets, therefore, are tools of the devil. They are liars, for they have his spirit, and he is the arch-liar (1 John ii. 22). It seems, then, as though John identified antichrist with the devil, in so far as he distinguished between antichrist and antichrists. And this identification is confirmed by the Apocalypse. The great personal opponent of Christ in the Apocalypse is Satan. The term "antichrist" is not used, but Satan in the Apoca-

lypse corresponds to the antichrist of the Epistle. The beast and the false prophet of the Apocalypse are simply Satan's embodiments, as the many apostate Christians of the Epistle are also his embodiments. There is a manifest difference in these embodiments, for, on the one hand, Satan is represented by apostate Christians; and, on the other hand, he is represented by secular power and by all false religious power, but there is no necessary conflict in the views. The Apocalypse is simply more comprehensive than the Epistle.

Subordinate to the apostle's teaching in regard to the antichrists is the statement that it is *the last hour* (3) *The last hour.* (1 John ii. 18). The aim of the passage in which he refers to the last hour is plainly to warn against the apostate Christians, in whom the apostle sees a manifestation of the antichrist. He infers from their appearance that it is the last hour, but it is not his purpose to give any doctrine on the subject of the end. Indeed, there is no eschatological doctrine, properly speaking, in John's Epistles. There are two hypothetical references to the Parousia (1 John ii. 28; iii. 2); a single incidental reference to the day of judgment (1 John iv. 17), and a single reference to the future glory of believers (1 John iii. 2); but the aim of the Epistles is to deal with the present life of the children of God.

SECTION II

THE APOCALYPSE

THE PAROUSIA OF CHRIST

CHAPTER I

THE CHRISTIAN'S MANUAL OF ARMS

THE Apocalypse is a book of war. The initial vision of Christ (i. 12-20) is warlike, as was that of the unnamed angel whom Daniel saw. The flaming eyes, the feet of brass, and the sword from the mouth are indications of a mission of conflict. And with this initial vision agrees the character of the Apocalypse as a whole. Every promise in the seven letters is to him who *overcometh*, and this word points to a battle-field. The first symbolic figure out of the sealed book is that of a conqueror (vi. 1-2). All the redeemed come out of great tribulation (vii. 14). Judgments are set forth in military dress. Thus there is the red horse whose rider takes peace from the earth (vi. 3-4). The scorpion-locusts move as an army under the angel of the abyss (ix. 11). The judgment from the East is in the form of a multitude of war-horses with tails that are serpents (ix. 13-21). There is war between Michael and the dragon (xii. 7), and the dragon makes war with the seed of the woman (xii. 17), which continues till Satan is bound (xx. 2). The great beast makes war

with the saints (xiii. 7). There is also the war of the great day of God, to which the kings of the whole earth are gathered (xvi. 14). Babylon is drunken with the blood of saints (xvii. 6). The ten horns and the beast make war against the Lamb (xvii. 14). The Word of God followed by the armies of heaven goes against the beast and his armies (xix. 11-21), and the last assault of Satan is presented as a war (xx. 8).

Since, then, the Apocalypse as a whole is a book of war, and since the seven messages of Christ to the churches have as their chief aim to help each member of these churches to overcome in the conflict, we may appropriately call these messages the Christian's Manual of Arms. In form, they are addressed to seven churches, one to each church; but at the close of each letter it is said to be for *all* the churches, and so for each member of every church (ii. 7, etc.).

The teaching of the Manual of Arms groups itself under three main heads, namely, The Leader's Knowledge, Soldierly and Unsoldierly Qualities, and Motives. First, in each of the seven letters, near its beginning and lending seriousness to all that follows, stands the solemn declaration "I know." Christ knows the character of each disciple, his love and faith, his deadness or lukewarmness (ii. 19; iii. 1, 15). He knows his toil, affliction, and poverty (ii. 2, 9). He knows about his witness-bearing (iii. 8-9), and all about his surroundings (ii. 13). Christ is thought of as having this knowledge because He walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks (ii. 1), visiting the churches one after another as their Bishop, and investigating their condition (iii. 2).

In the letters it is not said that *Christ* knows, but

instead of that name there is some more or less symbolic epithet, and this, as a rule, seems to be chosen with reference to the burden of the particular message that immediately follows. The designation in the letter to Ephesus is general, and applies to all the messages (ii. 1). It presents the Speaker as one who has complete authority over the churches, who, though invisible, yet walks in their midst. In the letter to Smyrna, where the disciples are exposed to imprisonment and death, the Author characterizes Himself as the First and the Last, who was dead, and lived (ii. 8). Herein is their comfort, for their life is from Him and is indestructible by any assault of the enemy. In the letter to Pergamum, where the adversaries of Christ were strong, and where there was gross sin within the church, the Author describes Himself as "the one who has the sharp two-edged sword" (ii. 12). This is suggestive for those who are disobeying Him, and suggestive in a different way for those who, while faithful, are hard-pressed by Satan. This two-edged sword can both avenge and deliver. The Author speaks of Himself in the letter to Thyatira as "the Son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished brass" (ii. 18). The reference to the flaming eyes and the crushing feet is appropriate in view of the Jezebelites at Thyatira, who under cover of the Christian name were living to the flesh. In the letter to Sardis, where the church as a whole was dead though having a name to live, the Author describes Himself as "the one who has the Seven Spirits of God and the seven stars" (iii. 1). The "Seven Spirits" are a symbol of the Holy Spirit in the completeness of His powers (i. 4 ; v. 6), and there is a manifest propriety

in representing Himself as possessing the fulness of the Spirit when speaking to a church which appeared to men to be alive, but which was really dead. He who has the fulness of the Spirit surely sees beneath the surface.

The Author speaks of Himself in the letter to Philadelphia as "the Consecrated, Genuine One" (iii. 7). In this city there were Jews who were being reached by the Gospel (iii. 9), and it is in view of this fact that the fitness of these titles appears. The Speaker is the "Consecrated One," that is, the one set apart to the Messianic office (comp. John x. 36). He is the "Genuine One," the genuine Messiah, and not a false Messiah, as the Jews had held. And looking now at those in the church who had a door of missionary opportunity opened before them (iii. 8), the fitness of the other designations becomes plain. The Writer is one who opens doors, and no one can shut them, that is, he has absolute authority. Finally, in the letter to Laodicea, where the church was in a most deplorable state, the Author calls Himself "the Amen, the Faithful Witness and the Beginning of Creation" (iii. 14). Accordingly, this church should consider that His sharp words of rebuke are faithful and will stand, and that He who was the active principle (*ἀρχή*) in the creation of the universe might also be the means of restoring a fallen church. So these various symbolical designations of the Author of the letters lend force to His statement that He *knows* the condition of each church and of each member. This One who knows is also the one whose knowledge is of the utmost concern to the recipients of the letters. For the faithful, His "*I know*" is a word of comfort and encouragement; for the unfaithful, it is a word of warning.

The second point in the Manual of Arms is a recognition and commendation of certain soldierly qualities and a warning against certain unsoldierly qualities. The stress of emphasis is on the warning.

The first soldierly quality mentioned is *patience* (ii. 2, 19; iii. 10). The quality denoted by the Greek word *ὑπομονή* is active rather than passive, and is illustrated rather by a man who, in his daily work, uncomplainingly bears a heavy load, than by a man who in prison or at the stake endures physical pain without murmuring. The patience of the Christians at Ephesus was seen in the fact that they bore, for the sake of Christ's name, heavy responsibilities, and were active in hard work without growing weary of it (ii. 1-6). So at Philadelphia, keeping the word of Christ's patience (iii. 10) appears to be the antithesis of denying His name (iii. 8), and hence denotes a resolute holding out in the good way.

Another quality of the Christian soldier is *impatience with men who claim the Christian name but are evil* (ii. 2). There were some in Ephesus who arrogated to themselves even the title of apostles, though they were false and bad in character. It is said to the credit of the faithful in that church that they tried these would-be apostles, for they could not calmly bear the burden of them. Their regard for the good name by which they were called would not let them hold their peace when they saw that name claimed by evil men. They were stirred with hot indignation toward these deceivers, and they put them to the test. And such indignation is pleasing to Christ. He hates the works of the Nicolaitans, and is pleased

when His followers hate them (ii. 6). There was a lack among the Christians of Pergamum and Thyatira of this wholesome moral revulsion toward those who stayed under the roof of the Church while they walked after the lusts of their own hearts (ii. 14, 20).

A third quality which Christ commends in His disciples, and which He Himself illustrates, is *faithfulness*.

(c) Faithfulness. This is to be complete, going the length of laying down life if need be (ii. 10). Antipas of Pergamum was an example of this soldierly quality, as were others in that city, and the souls whom John beheld under the altar (vi. 9). They did not deny the faith, but were through and through loyal to Christ, and for His disciples that is the essence of faithfulness. It is more comprehensive than patience, being equivalent to holding the name or word of Christ (ii. 13; iii. 8). It has the promise of the crown of life (ii. 10), and is a characteristic of all who wage victorious warfare by the side of the Lord of lords (xvii. 14).

Another quality in the Christian's Manual is *love*. Christ will have the *first* love maintained, that is, a

(d) Love. love that is ardent and self-sacrificing (ii. 4).

This will do works (ii. 5), will minister (ii. 19), and so will prove itself true love. This injunction to keep the first love, the love of the Christian's espousal to Christ, shows how far the Christian's Manual is from all earthly codes of arms, and how heavenly is the warfare it contemplates.

The next quality of the Christian soldier is *holiness* (iii. 4). There were some persons in Sardis who did

(e) Holiness. not defile their garments, but walked always in white. The issue of this sort of living is a walking with Christ hereafter; and no diviner emphasis

than this could be placed upon it for the heart of a Christian soldier. The way in which this quality is referred to later in the Apocalypse is quite in line with this passage. Thus, all the redeemed are represented as being before the throne in consequence of their having washed their robes and having made them white in the blood of the Lamb (vii. 14). In like manner the bride of the Lamb is clothed in white linen, which stands for the character that she has secured and maintained (xix. 8).

Turning to unsoldierly qualities, we notice first that the sins which had worked the greatest harm in the churches were eating sacrificial meat and committing fornication. This was the temptation to which some in the Pergamum congregation had succumbed (ii. 14), and some also in the church at Thyatira (ii. 20). Further, it appears that the author identifies the doctrine of Balaam with the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (ii. 15), and accordingly we have to think that this leaven had penetrated *three* of the seven churches. To judge from the messages, it had made least progress in Ephesus, and most in Thyatira. This eating of sacrificial meat is not mentioned by itself, but only in connection with unchastity. These two sins are associated in Israel's history (Num. xxv. 1-8), and it is well known that in the Gentile temples, notably in Asia Minor where the seven churches were situated, the grossest immorality was connected with the feasts to the gods. It may well be true, then, that John, even like Paul (1 Cor. x. 23-28), did not regard the eating of sacrificial meat as necessarily sinful. The danger may have lain wholly in the associations. It was perhaps the first step which made the

committing of fornication very easy. In regard to this sin of unchastity, we know from the New Testament Epistles that it was the sin into which the Gentile converts were especially liable to lapse, and the references to it in the Apocalypse outside of the first three chapters are both frequent and strong. Thus, for example, the redeemed are described as those who have been chaste (xiv. 4), and all fornicators are debarred entrance into the New Jerusalem (xxii. 15).

The abomination in which this sin was held by the Lord of the Church is seen in the terms which He applies to it. It is the doctrine of "Balaam," that is, purely heathenish (ii. 14). Its advocate in Thyatira is called "Jezebel," the most odious female name in Israel's history (ii. 20). Still further, the *deep things* which she claimed to teach are really deep things of Satan (ii. 24). The sword of judgment from the mouth of the Lord will come against every one guilty of this sin unless he repents (ii. 16).

It is, then, a question of life or death for the Christian disciple, his relation to this sin. Loyalty to Christ requires not only that he abstain from it, but also that he refuse to have fellowship with those who are guilty of it. The faithful in Thyatira are blamed because they have not put away Jezebel from their midst (ii. 20).

A different danger meets us in the church of Sardis (iii. 1-3). This had the reputation of being alive, but (b) Formal-ism. it was dead. Its reputation was based on works, which, though fair in the sight of men, were not satisfactory in the sight of God. It seems to have been dominated by the same tendency which characterized the Jews of Christ's day, that is,

formalism. It was the religion of the whitewashed sepulchre (Matt. xxiii. 27). The Christian soldier, then, is to seek to have his works *fulfilled* (*πεπληρωμένα*) before God, that is, coming up to His standard who looks ever upon the heart.

The third spiritual danger mentioned in our Manual of Arms is *lukewarmness* (iii. 15-16). This seemed to prevail in the entire church of Laodicea. (c) *Material-* This is not simply an aggravation of the ^{ism.} state of the Ephesian church where the first love had been lost, nor is it the formalism of Sardis, nor the grossness of Jezebelism. It is distinct from all these. It is salt that has lost its saltness, and that is henceforth good for nothing but to be trodden under foot. Lukewarmness, according to John, is a close approach to pure materialism. The Laodicean says, "I am rich, and I have gotten these riches myself, and I have need of nothing" (iii. 17). He lives and moves and has his being in the things of this world, that can be seen and handled and tasted. He has fallen from the love of the Father to love of the world, and is entangled by the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life (comp. 1 John ii. 15-16). Of course he has become blind to spiritual realities. He does not appreciate that he is poor and blind and naked in spirit (iii. 17). Indeed, he practically denies that he has a spirit. He has come to live for time rather than eternity, for his body instead of his spirit, and the Christian name which he still bears represents all that Satan has left him of his Christian heritage. His bearing this name makes him twofold more the child of Satan than he would be if he frankly disowned it. The Lord declares that this sort of religion is sickening

to Him. It is tepid water, which one involuntarily and violently spews out of the mouth. The Christian soldier, then, is to be on his guard against materialism, formalism, and unchastity, if he wishes to please Him who has called him into His service.

A third point in the Christian's Manual is *motives*. Thus the Lord threatens to move the Ephesian candlestick out of its place unless the members of the church seek to regain their first love (ii. 5). Its place was in the circle of seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which Christ walks (i. 12; ii. 1). To be moved out of its place is to forfeit the Lord's fellowship; or, to change the figure, as Christ is said to hold the churches in His hand (ii. 1), to cease to be in His hand and under His protecting care. The condition of things in Pergamum required far more vigorous language. The Lord calls for repentance, and adds, "Otherwise I come to thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (ii. 16). What it means to meet the sword of His mouth is seen from xix. 12, where those who come against the Lord are slain by this sword. Such an overthrow awaits the Balaamites in Pergamum unless they repent. A similar warning is given to those in Thyatira who are guilty of the same sin. It does not concern Jezebel herself, whose time for repentance is passed (ii. 21); but it concerns those who have been deceived by her. Except they repent, they shall be cast into great tribulation. The formal Christians of Sardis are threatened in a way that leaves much to their imagination. The Lord says, "If thou dost not watch, I will come as a thief, and thou shalt by no means know in what hour I come against thee" (iii. 3). They are thus left in the condition

(4) Motives.

(a) The appeal to fear.

(ii. 5).

of soldiers who are in the country of a superior enemy and liable at any hour of day or night to sudden surprise and destruction. Finally, to the Laodiceans, the warning is in the words, "I will spew thee out of my mouth" (iii. 16). It is plain that these are words of warning, for later in the message the Lord calls on the church to be zealous and repent (iii. 19). So the time of repentance was not yet past, as it was in the case of Jezebel (ii. 21), though these believers had fallen very low. The essential thought underlying the figure of water spewed from the mouth is that Jesus will utterly cease to own these persons as His disciples.

It may be noticed in regard to these threatenings against the unfaithful disciple that in four cases out of the five the sting of the threat lies in the changed attitude of Christ. The unrepentant disciple forfeits His fellowship, or instead of having Jesus come as a friend he sees Him come as a judge and an avenger. Thus it is involved that the fellowship of Christ is of supreme importance to the Christian soldier.

Secondly, there is an appeal to Christian ambition, which is more prominent in the Manual of Arms than the appeal to fear. No one of the letters, not even that to Laodicea, is without its appeal to hope based on the glories of the future. The last word is never one of threatening; after the threat there is always a promise. These promises are largely original in their symbolism, and are elaborated with evident delight. They constitute an appeal to Christian ambition that is without parallel in Scripture.

(b) The
appeal to
Christian
ambition.

There are four dominant thoughts in these promises. First in the order is *life*. Thus the victor shall eat of the tree of life which is in God's Paradise (ii. 7), he

shall not be hurt of the second death (ii. 11), he shall eat of the hidden manna (ii. 17), his name shall not be blotted out of the book of life (iii. 5), and he shall abide forever in the temple of God (iii. 12). No two of these promises are identical, though they all have the same general burden. Eating of the tree of life—the tree of the old Eden transplanted to the new Paradise (Gen. ii. 9; iii. 22)—expresses participation in the life of the Messianic kingdom. Not to be hurt of the second death, that is, the suffering appointed to the wicked beyond the final judgment (xx. 14; xxi. 8), is only another way of saying that the victor shall share in eternal life. But the change in expression is significant. The language calls up that which the faithful disciple escapes, and this is of such tremendous importance that deliverance from it is ample reward for all the struggle of earth. The hidden manna suggests other associations than gather about the tree of life, but its essential thought is the same. It stands for the heavenly life, just as the historical manna meant physical life to the Israelites. It is still life that is promised to the victor, in the assurance that his name shall not be blotted out of the book of life which is kept in heaven, and also in the assurance that he shall abide perpetually in the temple of God. He shall abide in it as a pillar, that is, he shall continue there as long as the temple itself continues.

The second thought in the promises is that the victor will have *recognition* of all that he has passed through.

Recognition. Christ will give him a *new name* which no one knows but himself and his Lord (ii. 17). As this new name is a reward for the earthly struggle, it seems most natural to regard it as epitomizing that

struggle. This view is confirmed by the statement that each victor's new name is *unknown* to all other men, for, in reality, no man knows the conflicts of any other soul than his own.

A third element in the promises is *honor*. Thus to the victor in the church at Thyatira is promised authority over the nations. He shall shepherd them with an iron rod, as the vessels of a potter are broken in shivers. This authority will be such as Christ received from the Father (ii. 26-27). The Lord here applies to His victorious disciple the same language that the second Psalm applies to the Messiah. It is Paul's thought, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him" (Rom. viii. 17); and it is like that of Jesus when He said to the twelve, "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28). The essential idea of the promise is that the overcoming disciple shares in the high position of the Master who has overcome (comp. iii. 21). That Master is king over all kings, and lord over all lords, and His follower who has kept His word unto the end becomes a partaker of that honor. The Master has gone forth conquering and to conquer (vi. 2), destined to break down all opposition and to shiver all persistent enemies, and the individual Christian who, in the name of this Master, overcomes in the earthly struggle, becomes a participant in the authority of his sovereign Lord. In line with this is the promise that the victor shall be clothed in white (iii. 4), and that Christ will confess his name before the Father and the angels (iii. 5). Christ's confession of the disciple's name is a public acknowledgment and indorsement. It makes plain to the dwellers in heaven that the disciple belongs to

Christ. Likewise, for a disciple to have the name of God upon him, and the name of God's city (iii. 12), is a mark of honor. It testifies that he belongs to God, and has the freedom of the city of God. And this idea of heavenly honor for the victor is perhaps expressed even more forcibly when Christ promises that the victor shall sit with Him in His throne as He, Christ, overcame and sat down with His Father on His throne (iii. 21). This is indeed for the Messiah to treat His triumphant follower as His brother. He could offer him nothing higher. It is the exaltation of victorious humanity to the side of the Son of God, and so to the side of God the Father.

There is yet another great thought in the promises to the overcoming disciple, and that is the thought of *higher appreciation of Christ and completer fellowship with Him*. For the Lord promises to the disciple His own *new* name (iii. 12; comp. xix. 12). This new name of Christ, since name stands for character, seems to imply that there are riches in Him which will not be appreciated by the disciple while on earth (comp. 1 John iii. 2). If this interpretation be correct, it is plain that the victor is to have a completer fellowship with the Lord as a reward for his earthly struggle. This truth is also involved in the promise of the Morning Star (ii. 28). For the Morning Star is a symbol of Christ Himself (xxii. 16). But since the Christian possesses Christ even now, by whose aid alone he wins his victory, and since the reward to be given him will naturally be something that he does not already possess, we are constrained to hold that the promise of the Morning Star implies a higher appreciation and completer possession of Christ than has been realized on earth.

Such, then, is the great appeal to the Christian soldier's hope and ambition. It is given to the faithful disciple, and, preceded by more or less severe rebuke, is given also to the unfaithful disciple. It is the last note to fall upon the ear in the case of the first three letters, and in the last four it is followed only by the injunction to heed what the Spirit says to the churches, — an injunction which applies to the promises no less than to the remainder of each letter. And so this sevenfold promise, which must well-nigh exhaust the vocabulary of glory, forms the closing part of the Christian's Manual of Arms. But ever, just before the promise, as the way leading to its realization, stand the words τῷ νικῶντι, "to him who overcomes"; and this overcoming covers the entire campaign of the individual life.

CHAPTER II

PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFLICT

IN the Fourth Gospel we have the narrative of a conflict between the Jewish leaders and Jesus, which resulted in the outward overthrow of Jesus, though He was spiritually triumphant. In the First Epistle of John there are sounds of war. The evil one, with the world as his vassal, is arrayed against God and His faithful few; and there are antichrists who seek to deceive the disciples of the Lord. But in the Apocalypse there is unrolled before us an elaborate picture of conflict between Christ and His foes. The contending forces are no longer partially or dimly outlined; on the contrary, they stand forth in clear, dramatic characterization. The conflict is not now that of a brief chapter of history, such as is recorded in the Fourth Gospel, but it comprehends in its vast sweep all the generations until the final overthrow of evil and the everlasting triumph of Christ's kingdom. The Fourth Gospel records the great facts which made the conflict of the Apocalypse inevitable, and which prophesy its final issues. The First Epistle, though containing notes of war, is chiefly concerned with the life of the children of God. Therefore, as we look forward with John toward the consummation of history, we are called upon to consider more particularly the participants in the conflict through which he takes us.

The character and influence of Satan are prominent in the Apocalypse, a fact that may be due in part to the general aim of the book. What Satan is in himself, in the thought of the author, appears from the symbols under which he is set forth.

I. The opposition.

(1) Satan.

First he appears under the symbol of a *dragon* (xii. 3-4, etc.), which has a basis in the Old Testament. Egypt and Babylon, the great foes of ancient Israel in different ages, are called dragons (Is. xxvii. 1; xxx. 7); and so it was natural to use this symbol for the great enemy of the new Israel of God. The dragon is *red*, which is a figurative way of saying, as Jesus said (John viii. 44), that he is a *murderer*. He has seven heads and ten horns (xii. 3). Seven is used throughout the Apocalypse to express the idea of completeness, and so we shall not err if we find in this symbol of seven heads the idea of complete headship. This interpretation is confirmed by the fact that in the Fourth Gospel Satan is designated as the *prince* of the world (John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11). The idea of the ten horns is closely related to this. For ten is everywhere in the Apocalypse the signature of Satan's kingdom, as twelve is the signature of the kingdom of God, and the horn is a common Scripture emblem of authority (*e.g.* Rev. v. 6). This conception of a dragon that has horns is found only in John, and has no more basis in mythology than the representation that he has seven heads. The author simply *makes* a dragon, to set forth particular thoughts. As that is true regarding the heads and horns, so it is also in regard to the following feature. The writer says that the tail of the dragon draws a third part of the stars of heaven and casts them to the earth (xii. 4). This reminds the reader of the little horn of the he-goat

in Daniel's vision, which waxed great even to the host of heaven; and some of the host and of the stars it cast down to the ground (Dan. viii. 9-10). The imagery in both instances sets forth the thought of exceeding great power. It is to be remembered that the dragon is seen by John in the sky, and that explains how he can easily represent it as coming in contact with the stars. So Satan under the symbol of the dragon is pictured as having vast power, and as a murderer.

Another designation of Satan is the *ancient serpent* (xii. 9; xx. 2). This is doubtless used under the influence of the story in the third chapter of Genesis, even as Jesus, when He said that the devil had been a murderer from the *beginning*, may have had in mind the serpent's deception of Eve, which was her spiritual murder (John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Rom. vii. 11). So this epithet implies that Satan has been in all history (comp. 1 John iii. 8), and that he is full of craft. The character of Satan as set forth in the names and symbols which have been considered is variously illustrated throughout the Apocalypse, but nothing essential is added to it.

But John does not represent Satan as appearing on the stage of history in his own person. He works through men and institutions that are congenial to him. John portrays two especial incarnations of Satan. One of them is his veritable *alter ego*, and to him he gives his throne (xiii. 1-8); the other is subordinate to the first, but has the same spirit and works for the same end (xiii. 11-17). These

(2) Satan's great embodiments.

(a) Composition of the first beast.

embodiments are both called "beasts," but the second bears also the name of the "false prophet" (xvi. 13). The first beast, that to which Satan gives his own throne on earth, is signifi-

cantly composite. It has parts of all the four beasts which Daniel saw come up out of the sea (Dan. vii. 1-8). Thus it is like a panther or leopard; it has the feet of a bear; it has the mouth of a lion, and it has ten horns like the fourth beast of Daniel's vision. Here, as in the case of the living creatures of chapter iv, the author freely modifies the Old Testament symbols, and so adapts them to his purpose. He takes the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion, that is, the parts with which these beasts destroy. And since he thus takes the destructive feature of the lion and the bear, it must be supposed that in likening his monster to a panther, he thinks of it as having the destructive attribute of that beast also. He may have had in mind its stealth, or its swiftness, or the two qualities combined. In giving it ten horns, as also in giving it seven heads, he is doubtless representing it as an embodiment of the dragon or Satan (xii. 3). Satan gives to this beast his throne (xiii. 2) because the beast fully *represents* him.

We are justified, then, in saying that the motives that guided John in the composition of this beast were the desire to represent it as most destructive, and at the same time as the plenipotentiary of Satan. It has the dangerous parts or qualities of the panther, bear, and lion, and it has Satanic authority. This is all simple and clear. So, also, are the statements that the monster's heads are covered with names of blasphemy, and that it has a mouth speaking blasphemy with which it blasphemes God and His people (xiii. 1, 5-6). As representing Satan, it is inevitably a blasphemer, like the "little horn" in Daniel (Dan. vii. 8), and the "man of sin" in Paul (2 Thess. ii. 4). It is also in keeping with the fact that this beast is Satan's *alter ego*, that he

is represented as having a world-wide influence, and as fighting against the saints during the entire period granted to him (xiii. 4-5, 7). But there is another feature, wholly original with John, which is not so plain. It is the fact that one of the seven heads of the monster is fatally wounded, and then is healed (xiii. 3, 12). The author says nothing as to the source of the fatal blow, or of the healing. He simply sees that one of the heads has received what he regards as a fatal wound, and that it is straightway made well. It must not be supposed that John thought of this wound as fatal merely to one of the heads; he speaks of it as a fatal blow to the beast itself (xiii. 12). The meaning of this strange phenomenon is not to be sought from afar. It must be in harmony with the rest of the picture, whose aim is to show how Satan is bodied forth in the beast. In other words, it presumably symbolizes some attribute of Satan or some feature of his work. What, then, is its meaning? Just what a person might naturally infer in regard to a beast, if, with his own eyes, he saw it at one moment smitten with a fatal wound, and the next moment saw it as sound as ever. He would say that it had a supernatural or marvellous vitality. Now I understand this to be the thought which the author expresses regarding the beast. Let it be wounded ever so badly, the wound soon heals. It has this recuperative power because it is the embodiment of Satan. Thus John represents Satan as having been at work from the beginning of history, with a vitality that has survived all the wounds he has received.

What now does this beast, as a whole, signify? It is an embodiment of Satan; but where is it fulfilled? It is the most potent embodiment of Satan, for it has his

throne; but what, in John's thought, was its historical counterpart? In the first place, since John bases his symbol upon Daniel's vision, it is probable that it has essentially the same significance. He freely modifies the Old Testament symbolism here as in many other cases, but he never departs from the fundamental thought which the respective symbol had in the ancient literature. Now Daniel explains his symbol of the beasts as meaning kings or kingdoms (Dan. vii. 17, 23). It is thus, to say the least, extremely probable at the outset that John's symbol has to do with *political* power. Further, this meaning is established by John himself when in a later passage he interprets the heads and horns of the beast as standing for *kings* (xvii. 8-12). These kings are not wholly identified with the beast. The beast itself is spoken of as "an eighth" (xvii. 11), thus as being outside of the circle of seven, while at the same time it is said to be *of the seven*, that is, of the same spirit. And in like manner the ten horns, that also represent kings, are not identified with the beast. For they are said to receive authority as kings *with* the beast (xvii. 12). If, then, the heads and horns denote rulers that are dominated by Satan, the beast itself that is thought of as outlasting the individual heads and horns cannot well be regarded otherwise than as a symbol of *secular power permeated by Satan's influence*. This antichristian, secular power is expressed through kings, yet plainly it cannot be identified with any individual ruler. These hostile rulers come and go; but the beast continues, for it has the vitality of Satan. This beast, then, whether we think of the separate heads or of the symbol in its entirety, embodies the idea of secular power which

is directed by Satan. But there remains one statement touching this beast which, according to the common interpretation of it, is fatal to the view above presented. This statement is in the tenth verse, and refers to the seven kings as belonging to the past, the present, and the future.

(d) Symbolic numbers connected with the beast.

In order to understand this statement, it is needful to bear in mind John's use of numbers in general. It is not necessary, indeed, to *prove* that he uses numbers symbolically, for he himself again and again as good as declares this. Thus, for example, in i. 4, when he prays for grace and peace from "Him who is and who was and who is to come," and from the "Seven Spirits," and from "Jesus Christ," it is certain that the phrase "Seven Spirits" is a symbol for the Holy Spirit; in other words, that *seven* is used figuratively. So in vii. 5-8 no one can seriously suppose that the number twelve thousand is to be taken arithmetically, and that accordingly there were in John's thought precisely the same number of righteous persons in each of the twelve tribes. It is patent that the number is a pure symbol. So, once more, in xxi. 16, where John says that the New Jerusalem is twelve thousand furlongs high, it is plain that the number is a symbol. Such cases show that John used numbers symbolically, at least sometimes, and, taken together with the fact of the admittedly symbolic character of the Apocalypse, and also with the fact that he *nowhere* plainly uses a number arithmetically, they establish a presumption that the numbers are *all*, without exception, symbolical. Thus the whole drift and character of the book require that one should give conclusive evidence in his support who should venture to hold that John in his symbol of the beast

uses numbers arithmetically. But, as a matter of fact, it has been quite generally assumed without remark that the numbers must be taken here arithmetically, especially the *five*, *one*, and *one* of xvii. 10. But to take these numbers thus is wholly unjustifiable and unnecessary, and has ever reduced the interpretation of this entire section to a hopelessly chaotic state. Seven, as in every case in the Apocalypse, denotes completeness, and so the seven heads, which are seven kings, denote the entire circle of kings or rulers who are moved by Satan. There is no reference to seven particular kings. In like manner the ten horns, since ten is Satan's number, denote the complete ring of *Satan's* rulers. The difference between this circle and the other is not so much in the numbers as in other particulars. The ten are described as more completely subject to Satan than the seven (xvii. 13). They are not independent kings like the others, but they rule *with* the beast (xvii. 12). Not only so, but they belong to the *eighth* head, which John calls the beast itself. This goes into perdition, and is thought of as the final embodiment of antichristian, secular power (xvii. 11). Thus there is this distinction between the seven and the ten, that the circle of seven is general, and the circle of ten is special. The circle of ten may be thought of as a very small circle lying within a large one, the two blending at one point; or it may be thought of as a circle lying outside of the other, in which case the circle of seven is modified, and includes all hostile rulers *up to* the final manifestation. The point does not seem to me to be of great importance. The leading thoughts are plain.

As for the *five*, *one*, and *one* of xvii. 10, the meaning, unless we arbitrarily abandon the symbolism of num-

bers, is this. Together they of course make seven, that is the complete circle of opposing rulers prior to the last manifestation of Satan. But when John says that five are fallen, he expresses the thought that the greater part of these hostile kings are *past*. In other words, *the conflict is approaching its end*. This thought is in keeping with the context (e.g. x. 7; xi. 15-18). The consummation was to come in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, and that angel had already sounded his trumpet (xi. 15). This, then, is one of the encouraging signs that the end is relatively near. But *one is*, that is to say, the line of hostile rulers, though the majority of them belong to the past, still continues. *The other is not yet come*, that is, this line is to continue for a time in the future. This interpretation brings the passage into complete harmony with the thought of the Apocalypse.

It follows from what has been said that neither the beast nor any one of its heads can be strictly *identified* with the imperial Roman power of John's time. That power was doubtless the *chief* embodiment of Satan in John's thought,¹ but it was only one in the circle. It did not exhaust the symbol. It was a fulfilment, but not, according to John, the only one.

In line with this conception of the beast, and we may say *requiring* it, is the statement that the beast con-
 (e) The time
 of the beast. tinued forty-two months (xiii. 5). This is the number of the dragon, though in speaking of it John used the expression "one thousand two hundred and threescore days" (xii. 6), or "a time,

¹ The name lying under the number 666 was probably some name for that imperial power, perhaps, as Irenæus suggests, the Greek equivalent of the English word *Latin*.

times, and a half-time" (xii. 14). All these terms are equivalent, denoting a period of three years and a half. This, as many writers have recognized, is a typical expression based on the fact that Jerusalem was profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes for a period of about three years and a half. Thus it is a symbol for the time of the oppressor, which time, reckoned in years and centuries, is known to God only (comp. Acts i. 7). So this beast, this embodiment of Satan, in secular or political power, works until Satan himself is bound and suppressed (xix. 20-xx. 2). The symbol is fulfilled in every kingdom, empire, or state which is ruled by influences from beneath rather than from above, and in so far as it is ruled by such influences. Like the symbol of the dragon, it belongs to all lands and all times.

The dragon's second great embodiment is a beast that comes up out of the earth, which has a lamb's horns and the dragon's voice (xiii. 11-17). Daniel's four beasts all came out of the sea. John's thought is different. One of his beasts rises out of the sea and the other out of the earth. This is one of John's methods of expressing *universality*. So the splendid angel of chapter x. puts one foot on the land and one on the sea, in token of the fact that his bitter-sweet message was for all men (comp. also viii. 7-9; xx. 13). In the same manner, to express visibly the thought that Satan's embodiments have universal influence, as Satan himself has, John represents one of them as rising out of the sea and one out of the land. This second beast is pictured as having an innocent exterior, but a dangerous interior. The tone of a dragon is in its voice, though its horns are those of a lamb. Thus it seems to fall at once

(f) The second beast, or false prophet.

into the class of false prophets whom Jesus described as coming in sheep's clothing, but having a wolf's spirit (Matt. vii. 15), and this impression is confirmed by John, for in xix. 20 he calls this beast the "false prophet." Like the false prophets of whom Jesus speaks (Mark xiii. 22), this one works signs, comparable in greatness to Elijah's wonderful act (2 Kings i. 10). This false prophet, like the first beast, manifests the character of Satan. This has already been suggested in the significant statement that it had a dragon's voice. It is further seen in the fact that the whole purpose of the second beast is to secure the worship of the first beast, which is Satan's other self (xiii. 14-15). It shows its kinship also in the fact that it *deceives* those dwelling on the earth (xii. 9; xiii. 14). As an illustration of its lying wonders, it causes an image to be made, and endows it with intelligence and the faculty of speech. The aim of this is that the image may inform against any who do not worship it.

The general meaning of this symbol of the second beast is plain. It is as manifestly religious as the first beast is political. This is involved in the name "false prophet," and is also apparent from the fact that it is throughout concerned with worship (xiii. 12, 15). But as this beast is subservient to the first, and so is subservient to Satan, it naturally symbolizes religious power which serves Satan's ends. It must, however, be regarded as a symbol of false religious power in general, and not of false Christianity in particular. For, first, there was not in John's time nor for two centuries thereafter a false Christianity that was at all commensurate with this symbol in its sweep of influence; and, second, as the

(g) Meaning
of this
symbol.

first beast is plainly a symbol of universal significance continuing as long as Satan himself, so must the significance of the second beast be universal, for it is represented as the *permanent* tool of the first beast. In the time of John, the symbol found its realization in the false religions of the heathen world, which were opposed to Christianity; but the symbol necessarily covers any and all forms of religion whose trend is downward rather than upward, and which serve Satan rather than God.

Wholly secondary in importance and yet not to be overlooked when describing the participants in the great conflict of the Apocalypse, are the angels of ⁽³⁾ Satan's Satan. One only is referred to by name, ^{angels.} to wit, Abaddon or Apollyon (ix. 11). He is the angel of the abyss, and his name signifies *destruction* or *destroyer*. Both his abode and his name mark him as belonging with Satan. At the same time he is represented as active in a judgment upon the enemies of God. This is like the conception of xvii. 16, where the ten horns and the beast fall out with the harlot and make her desolate, though their interests are one, and though all alike are hostile to God. The author may thus embody the thought that the Lord can overrule Satan and make him defeat his own ends. He can use the forces from beneath in the infliction of woe on those among men who fight against Him, and that is what He does in the case of Abaddon and his army of scorpion-locusts.

There is one *general* reference to Satan's angels in the Apocalypse, namely, in xii. 7-12. The passage seems to imply that their number is relatively large. They are represented as having had, with Satan, a place in heaven, or the upper air, until cast down by Michael. The context suggests that this angelic strife

was occasioned by the dragon's hostility toward Christ (xii. 3-6). So this conflict between Christ and Satan involves, according to the author, all the friends and foes of God, angels as well as men. Since John thought that Christ's purpose was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8), he could not well avoid thinking that all the angels of Satan would be intensely active in the struggle against Christ.

Satan himself and his angels do not appear in John's historical panorama except by proxy. We have the two (4) Satan's great embodiments called the "beast" and the rank and file. "false prophet," which stand for all political and religious power that serves Satan. We also have what may be called the rank and file of Satan, for in the conflict of the Apocalypse all beings are ranged on one side or the other. There are no neutrals.

This rank and file includes Jews as well as Gentiles. Thus there were Jews in Smyrna and in Philadelphia whom John called Satan's synagogue (ii. 9; iii. 9). Their opposition to the faith ranged them with the great opponent. It appears that John regarded some of those who bore the name of Christian as common soldiers of Satan. Thus in the church at Thyatira there were some who lived lives of gross sin, and who seem to have laid claim to a deeper knowledge than ordinary believers possessed, according to which knowledge they doubtless sought to justify their lives; but John says that the deep things which they pretended to know were really the deep things of Satan (ii. 24). That is to say, these nominal Christians, Jezebel and her dupes, were in reality tools of Satan; and since the sins of the Jezebelites were not different from those of the Balaamites in the church at Pergamum and of the Nicolaitans in

the Ephesian church (ii. 6, 14-15), it may be safely said that John regarded these also as being practically the subjects of Satan. This accords with the teaching of the First Epistle (1 John iv. 1-3). The great number of Satan's rank and file is emphasized in the Apocalypse. As Satan is the deceiver of the whole world (xii. 9), so the whole earth marvelled after the great embodiment of Satan (xiii. 3), and through it paid worship to the dragon. The authority of the beast is yet more strongly expressed as extending over every tribe and people and tongue and nation (xiii. 7), and the false prophet also has a world-wide influence (xiii. 16). In keeping with this is the statement that the cities of the nations in general are of such sort as to be exposed to the seventh bowl of judgment (xvi. 17-19). The *many waters* on which Babylon sits are also to be mentioned, for they signify, according to John, peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues (xvii. 15). In the last battle which the beast and the false prophet are said to wage against Christ, the number of their followers is so great that the bodies of the slain are enough to fill all the birds of the air (xix. 17-21). Once more, in the closing chapter of earthly history, in the shadow of the great day of judgment, Satan is able to deceive a host whose number is as the sand of the sea (xx. 8). Thus throughout the book Satan's following is portrayed as alarming by its vast extent.

John represents the beast as closely related both to the *holy city* and *Babylon*, and yet not identified with them. He gives to these cities an independent part ⁽⁵⁾ Satan's in his vision, and they are among the great ^{cities.} forces of Satan. We may briefly consider their position and character. The holy city or the great city (xi. 2, 8),

which, spiritually speaking, is called also Sodom and Egypt (ix. 8), appears permeated by the spirit of the beast out of the abyss. For though it is said that the witnesses of Christ are overcome by the beast itself (xi. 7), it is plain that the city is responsible for their death, since it is the *city* on which vengeance is taken (xi. 13). It may be inferred that the city was regarded by John as the tool of the beast because the dishonor shown to the bodies of the murdered witnesses is charged against the inhabitants of the city (xi. 9), and they are filled with joy at the death of the witnesses (xi. 10).

The historical basis of this type was Jerusalem, as is plain from the clause, "Where also their Lord was crucified" (xi. 8), but the actual Jerusalem was *only* the basis. The city of this passage, like the temple and the two witnesses, is a symbol, and capable of manifold fulfillments. Any city that has the spirit of the old Jerusalem which crucified the Lord is in so far a realization of John's type.

The other city that is dominated by Satan occupies a large place in the Apocalypse. Like the beast out of the abyss, it is first mentioned briefly (xiv. 8); then more and more fully (xvi. 19; xviii. 2-24). It is called *Babylon the great* and the *harlot* (xiv. 8; xvi. 19; xvii. 1). It is described largely in terms which the old prophets applied to the literal Babylon. Thus the epithet "great" is applied to it as in Daniel (Dan. iv. 30). Regarded as a harlot, it is said of her that all the nations have drunk of her wine; that she dwells upon many waters; that she says, "I sit as a queen and am no widow and shall not see mourning" (Rev. xiv. 8 with Jer. li. 7; Rev. xvii. 1 with Jer. li. 13; Rev. xviii. 7 with Is. xlvi. 7-8). The language in which her judgment is set forth is also

chiefly from the prophets' description of the judgment of ancient Babylon (Rev. xiv. 8 with Is. xxi. 9; Rev. xviii. 2 with Jer. l. 39; Rev. xviii. 4 with Jer. li. 45; Rev. xviii. 5 with Jer. li. 9). It is plain that John has the ancient Babylon in mind, that is, the character and fate of that city, though not, of course, the actual Babylon, for that had long lain in ruins. He uses Babylon as a type, as he uses Jerusalem. A single feature of the city points to Rome exclusively (xvii. 9), just as in speaking of the holy city he used an expression that pointed exclusively to Jerusalem (xi. 8). The woman is referred to as sitting on *seven mountains*, probably an allusion to the seven hills of Rome. Without doubt Rome was the chief fulfilment of the symbol in John's time. The colors of his picture are partly drawn from that, but more largely from the old Babylon. He has in mind a great commercial centre and cosmopolitan city (xvii. 15; xviii. 11-19), and such was Rome preëminently. But the spiritual traits of his Babylon, such as idolatry (xvii. 1), pride (xviii. 7), and hostility toward the disciples of Christ (xvii. 6), were as true of other cities as of Rome. Probably we must say that John wrote with his thought upon the city on the Tiber, but still it is true that the local and temporal in the Apocalypse belong rather to its form than to its content. His real concern is with the underlying *forces* that work toward the consummation, and with that consummation itself. If, then, his vision is essentially true, we must suppose that, so long as the consummation is a fact of the future, the forces represented by Babylon, no less than the force represented by the symbol of the dragon, are present realities. His vision included potentially all the forms in which these various forces

should express themselves prior to the end of the present age.

We have called the Apocalypse a book of war. It is also a book of paradoxes, as may be seen, for example,

II. The in the fact that the most common designation of Him who leads in this war is the *Lamb*

victorious forces. (1) Jesus the (*ἀρνίον*), or, since the Greek word thus translated is a diminutive, and since it stands over

Messiah. against "wild beast" (*θηρίον*), we may render it the *gentle Lamb*. This name is put on the lips of the

guilty, who call on the mountains to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb (vi. 16), and it is used also by

the innumerable company of the angels and the redeemed (v. 11-12). It is employed when the author manifestly

thinks of the crucifixion of Jesus (v. 6), and also when speaking of God's eternal purpose of redemption (xxi.

27). The form of the designation is peculiar to the Apocalypse; but the content, like that of the word *lamb*

(*ἀμνός*) in John i. 29, 36, is probably akin to that of the classical passage in Is. liii, the unresisting sacrifice.

(a) Aspects Various aspects of this sacrifice are suggested. Thus it contributes to Christ's qualification to take the Book of Revelation and to

open it (v. 6-7), and is celebrated in the new song of the four and twenty elders (v. 9). This is analogous

to the teaching of *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, that the Messiah was made perfect through suffering (Heb. v. 9).

Again, the sacrifice of Jesus is the ground of the seven-fold ascription which is offered to Him by the angels

and the redeemed (v. 12), and thus is apparently regarded by the author either as an epitome of the work and

service of Jesus, or as the chief act of that service. One may suppose that, in the thought of the angels,

the sacrifice of Jesus was a beautiful and noble deed, and hence a ground of praise; for there is no indication that the author thought of the angels as personally benefited by that sacrifice. The redeemed, however, when they join in ascribing glory and honor to Jesus on the ground that He was slain, are conscious that His death stood in some vital relation to their salvation. The countless host whom He purchased for God, He purchased *with His blood* (v. 9). This is a general statement, and furnishes no more material for a specific doctrine of the atonement than do the words of Jesus.

Another aspect of the sacrifice of Jesus is presented by John when he says of the redeemed that they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (vii. 14). Here, as in 1 John i. 7, it is the constant influence of the death of Jesus on the *sanctification* of His people that is contemplated, for throughout the Apocalypse white robes are regarded as the appropriate heavenly dress of those who in the earthly life overcame (iii. 4, 5, 18; xix. 8). There is nowhere in the Apocalypse a specific reference to the blood of Jesus in connection with a man's entrance into the new life. There is a further word on the sacrifice of Jesus that belongs here, namely, the statement that the saints overcome Satan on account of the blood of the Lamb (xii. 11). This is the *motive* that enables them to bear their testimony and to go the length of laying down their lives for Christ. The love that prompted His sacrifice and that still speaks through it (i. 5) awakens a corresponding love in them.

It has been noticed that the favorite designation in the Apocalypse is the *Lamb*, or the gentle Lamb; and that the origin and associations of this name turn our thought

to His sacrifice, and to His gentle, submissive spirit. There is a broader reference to the work of Jesus in the term *witness* (*μάρτυς*), which also is peculiar to the Johannean writings. When, in the formal salutation, Jesus is called the faithful witness (i. 5), it seems probable that the author thought especially of Jesus' earthly life, His entire ministry. For the witness-bearing is followed by the resurrection, and that by the position of ruler over the kings of the earth (i. 5). This order indicates that John was thinking of the witness which Jesus bore while on earth — a conclusion strengthened by the fact that in the Fourth Gospel the activity of Jesus is by preference designated "witnessing" (e.g. John iii. 11; v. 31). But while John may have thought particularly of the earthly life of Jesus when he called Him the faithful witness, he did not limit His witness-bearing to that period. He thought of Him as witnessing to men through the book which he (John) wrote (xxii. 20), and apparently thought that He would witness to the redeemed through all the future, disclosing more and more of the thought of the Father (iii. 12).

It accords with the place given to the witness-bearing of Jesus Himself that the author sums up the duty of the disciples of Jesus in bearing witness, or holding the testimony of Jesus. It is this that makes a man a "martyr" (*μάρτυς*), that is, a witness, and such are all the redeemed (xii. 11, 17). This witness is a man's own testimony regarding Jesus (xii. 11); but still the author may have regarded it as essentially the same as Jesus' own testimony (i. 9).

(c) Exalta-
tion of Jesus. The exaltation of Jesus by the author of the Apocalypse, while containing thoughts which are found elsewhere in the New Testament, is

fuller and more splendid than that in any other canonical writing. The phraseology has in the main a historical basis, and the thought is Messianic; that is to say, Jesus is exalted as the one who has fulfilled the Messianic hope. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root and offspring of David (v. 5; xxii. 16). He is the Lord's Messiah (xi. 15), and by His resurrection has been installed as ruler of the kings of the earth (i. 5). Many royal diadems are on His head (xix. 12), for He is king of kings and lord of lords (xvii. 14; xix. 16). His glory is emblemized in that He comes seated on a white cloud, realizing Daniel's august vision (xiv. 14). He has all authority. Though appearing in the vision as a gentle Lamb, He has seven horns, He has the key of David, and sits on the throne of heaven with the Father Almighty (v. 6; iii. 7, 21; vii. 17; xxii. 1). All these figures assert His divine authority, the authority given to Him by God (iii. 21). His terrible might as He goes against His enemies is suggested by the symbol of feet of burnished brass, a voice as the voice of many waters (i. 15), eyes as a flame of fire (i. 14), and a sharp two-edged sword from the mouth (i. 16) — a sword before which the hosts of enemies are swept away as darkness before the light (xix. 21). He is uniquely associated with God, having the fulness of the Spirit (v. 6), sharing with God the throne of heaven (xxii. 1, 3), and with Him receiving ascriptions of praise from angels and redeemed men (v. 13; vii. 10). It is true that His disciples share His throne, and reach it by the same way which Jesus took to reach the Father's throne, namely, the way of "overcoming" (iii. 21); and yet His position remains forever unique. He alone is the Messiah. His disciples may win a wreath of life

(ii. 10), and share His authority over the nations (ii. 26-27); but on His head alone are the many kingly diadems (xix. 12). He is the bridegroom, His disciples are the bride (xix. 7-8). He is the Morning Star, who brings to His own the perfect day of God's grace (xxii. 16). But while the Apocalypse associates Jesus with God in a unique manner, even as Jesus Himself did according to all our Gospels, it also separates Him from God. God is His *God* as well as His Father (i. 6; iii. 2, 12; ii. 18). The Lord God is the creator (iv. 11); Christ is the beginning (*ἀρχή*) of the creation of God (iii. 14). The crown of the conquering Messiah was *given* to Him (vi. 2), as was the privilege of sitting with the Father in His throne (iii. 21). The name *God* is given to the Father only; Jesus is the Word of God (xix. 13), His Messiah (xi. 15), and as such His unique manifestation. Therefore the Parousia of Christ is the Parousia of Jehovah; and when it is thought of as accomplished, John modifies his designation of Jehovah and calls Him the one "who is and who was" (i. 4, 8; iv. 8; xi. 17; xvi. 5). He no longer calls Him "the coming one," for He is now thought of as come, namely, in Christ.

This conception of Christ which the Apocalypse gives us is almost exclusively historical. There is an
 (d) Pre-
 existence. allusion to the influence of the Messiah on the creation (iii. 14), and, still more significant, the author puts on the lips of Jesus a symbolical claim to eternal existence in the words "I am the first and the last" (i. 17). This symbol and the parallel ones are elsewhere used of God (i. 8; xxi. 6; xxii. 13). It will be noticed that in the exceptional passage, the same one who says, "I am the first and the last," says also,

"I was dead," which certainly suggests that the author applies this symbol to Jesus and to God with a difference. The third and last allusion to an existence antedating history is found in the figure of "white hair" in the initial vision of Christ, a feature borrowed from the vision of the Ancient of days in Daniel (vii. 9). But neither of these symbols contains any implication regarding the *nature* of the existence, which is predicated of the Messiah. He is exalted to the throne ^{(e) Relation} of heaven, as in other writings of the apos- to God. tolic age, and is with God a recipient of blessing, honor, glory, and dominion; but even in His heavenly exaltation He speaks of God as "my God" (*e.g.* iii. 12). And the Apocalypse emphasizes the supremacy, the aloneness, of the one God. It is He who is designated as "the one who sits on the throne," its original and absolute possessor (*e.g.* v. 13; vi. 16; vii. 15). He exalts the Messiah to share it with Him, as the Messiah exalts His followers (iii. 21). God is the Almighty, and it is in keeping with the character of the Apocalypse that stress is laid on this attribute (*e.g.* i. 8; iv. 8; xi. 17). No enemy or combination of enemies can wage victorious warfare against Him. Again, He alone is holy (xv. 4; xvi. 5; comp. iv. 8; vi. 10), and He is the sovereign judge (xiv. 7; xx. 12), though He gives to His Messiah judicial authority (*e.g.* ii. 7). It is doubtless due to the character of the book as a book of judgment that the fatherhood and love of God are wholly in the background, even as its vision of Christ is predominantly that of a warrior-judge.

In presenting the teaching of the Apocalypse in regard to its central figure, Christ, we have already given in part its conception of Jehovah; but an addi-

tional statement is necessary. Although Christ is the leader in the conflict, Jehovah also is vitally concerned.

(a) *Jehovah.* He is a source of grace and peace to the churches (i. 4); He vouches for the truth of the word about the coming of Christ (i. 7-8); He holds the book of the future in His right hand (v. 1); He shares with Christ the praise of the choir universal (v. 13), and of the redeemed in particular (vii. 10); His name is on the forehead of the saved, as is also that of Christ (*e.g.* vii. 3; xiv. 1); the dominion of the world is to become His as well as Christ's (xi. 15); all men who do not belong to Christ are called upon to fear God in view of His day of judgment (xiv. 7); it is His wrath which is to be dreaded (xiv. 10); He it is who sets the foes at variance with each other (xvii. 17), and He is the reward of the soul that overcomes (xxi. 7). But Jehovah does not appear on the earthly stage. He is indeed spoken of as "the coming one," but His coming is in Jesus Christ. His almighty power is pledged for the fulfilment of the kingdom of Christ (i. 8; x. 6), and He is doubtless regarded by John as the supreme force that is tending toward that "far-off, divine event"; but He manifests His purpose and power through His Son, His Word (xix. 13). The elaborate vision of God in chapter iv., though full of significance and beauty, is largely incidental with regard to the thought of the Apocalypse. The aim of it is to give dignity and glory to the revelations of the future by tracing those revelations up to the infinitely glorious Jehovah. He, and no other, is the source of the great disclosures. And yet the attributes of God which are here figuratively set forth have a meaning for the development of the

Messianic kingdom on earth. The brightness of jasper and the red of sardius (iv. 3), emblemizing on the basis of Ezekiel (Ez. i. 4; viii. 2) the divine *holiness* and *justice*, contain as it were a prophecy of the outcome of the conflict between the followers of Christ and the followers of Satan; and the rainbow above the throne (iv. 3) may serve to comfort the readers by reminding them of the *grace* of God. Redeemed *humanity*, represented by the four-and-twenty elders wearing golden wreaths (iv. 4), and restored *creation*, under the symbol of the four living creatures (iv. 6-8), surround the throne, and fill the air with ascriptions of praise and honor to Jehovah, the eternal and almighty Creator, and the Coming One. Thus, above the conflict of earth, is one who is surely able to bring it to a happy issue for His people, and who, as the ultimate source of salvation, is yet to receive the homage of saved humanity and the praise of all His works.¹

With the exception of a single passage the good angels of the Apocalypse are not represented as taking part in the conflict between Christ and his foes. They ascribe praise to Christ after He opens (3) Angels. the book of the future (v. 11-12), and they ascribe praise unto God in the day when the countless multitude of the redeemed stand before the throne and before the Lamb (vii. 11-12). They appear frequently as helps to the articulation of John's thought, blowing the trumpets that announce judgments (viii. 7, etc.), or pouring out the bowls of God's wrath upon the earth (xvi. 1), or heralding approaching events (xiv. 8, 15, 17, 18); but they are not,

¹ Of the Holy Spirit the Apocalypse speaks only in connection with Christ, if we except the general reference in the Introduction and in the Conclusion of the book (i. 4; xxii. 17).

as a rule, involved in the conflict. The single exception is the case of Michael and his angels, who fight against the dragon in the upper air and prevail (xii. 7-9). Michael had had a warlike reputation since the days of Daniel, when he had helped the unnamed angel against the prince of Persia (Dan. x. 13). In those days he seems to have been regarded as the patron angel of Israel (Dan. x. 21). In the Apocalypse he shows himself more than a match for the dragon, and the latter is cast down (xii. 9). Yet it is not to be inferred that John thought of Michael as being in himself stronger than the dragon. He teaches that the individual Christian can overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb (xii. 11); but the Christian is not therefore mightier than Satan. The Christian *with Christ* is mightier. In like manner John may have thought of Michael as overcoming Satan in virtue of the victory which Christ had gained over him. This is the only plain instance in the Apocalypse where the angels take part in the war against the foes of Christ, and this passage is incidental. The armies which are in heaven, that follow Christ upon white horses when He comes forth against the beast and the false prophet, may be supposed to have included angels with saints; but if so, these angels appear to have no function in the contest other than to add to the glory of Christ's manifestation (xix. 14, 21).

It is worthy of especial notice that the Apocalypse has nothing to set over against the two great embodiments of Satan,—the beast and the false prophet. The only embodiment of Christ is the individual believer. The Church is not in the conflict of the Apocalypse, that is, as an organization. The only references to the Church as a whole are in the passages in which she is represented as a woman in glorious apparel,

(4) Christ's rank and file.

or a fugitive woman pursued by the dragon, and as the bride of the Lamb (xii. 1, 6, 14; xix. 7; xxi. 9). But in no one of these passages is there the idea of the Church entering the conflict as a body. It is not intimated that the organization as such is a means used by Christ against Satan. Nor, indeed, is the local church, as such, treated as a factor in the conflict. The seven churches, representing the entire circle of Christian congregations, are not exhorted to overcome; but it is the individual believer in each church who is exhorted to overcome, and the promises are to individuals, not to the church.

This was doubtless a reflection of the actual state of things in John's day. The political organization was a great factor in the life of the time, and, as an organization, was arrayed against Christianity. False religion, also, was organized, and as a corporate body opposed the new faith. But the Church of the first century consisted of a large number of isolated communities, with no general organization. They had one Lord and one faith, but they were not outwardly unified. Little stress was put on the organization, even of the local church, as was to be expected. For all authority in it was moral, and it conceived of its mission as moral and spiritual. So neither the local church nor the Church catholic is treated in the Apocalypse as a separate element, through which, as an organization, Christ works.

But we have over against Satan's great embodiments and Satan's rank and file only the rank and file of Christ, individual believers waging to all outward appearances an individual warfare, like the knights-errant of the Middle Ages, but really working together, since all alike are witnesses of the one Christ. Regarding the number of these contestants, it may be said, in the

first place, that it is not so prominent as the number of Satan's followers; and in the second place that the sum total is represented as a countless host (vii. 9). They are out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation (v. 9). They are saints (xiii. 10), and have the seal of God on the forehead, as the followers of Satan have his mark on their right hand or on the forehead (xiii. 16). Though fighting single-handed, they are clothed with power which, until their work is accomplished, is greater than that of all their enemies. It is likened to the power with which Moses and Elijah were equipped (xi. 5-6). The weakest of them can overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb (xii. 11); but when their work is accomplished, they are sometimes suffered to be overcome by the beast, that is, in an outward, physical sense (xi. 7). Such, then, in brief outline, are the rank and file of Christ, as they appear in the vision of the Apocalypse.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFLICT

THE great outstanding event of all the earthly future is, according to the Apocalypse, the coming of Christ. The author sometimes speaks of the coming of Jehovah, as in the unique designation, ⁽¹⁾ The Parousia. "He who is and who was and who is to come" (i. 4); but he undoubtedly thought of this advent of God as realized in the coming of Christ. For the divine coming, with the exception of the designation just mentioned, is always the coming of Christ, and in what may be called the theme of the book it is He whose coming is announced (i. 7).

The coming of Christ, according to the Apocalypse, is a *spiritual fact or process*. This appears from the fundamental passage in vi. 1-2. Christ is here represented as going forth conquering and to conquer. This is part of the content ^(a) Nature of the Parousia. of that book which makes known the things that are to come to pass before the consummation. He *is* conquering in the present; He is to *continue* to conquer until the end. That is to say, this symbol represents Him as present in the entire development of the future, advancing to ultimate triumph. But plainly, Christ is not, was not then, *visibly* present in the development of His kingdom. Again, John's conception of the coming

of Christ is manifest in those passages which make certain historical punishments synonymous with a coming of Christ. Thus the Lord calls on the church at Ephesus to repent; and says that unless it does, He will *come* and will remove its candlestick out of its place (ii. 5). Here a visible coming of Christ is plainly out of the question. Many a church and many an individual has disobeyed Christ and has not repented, and His threatened judgment has come upon them, but without any visible appearing of the Lord. It has come as a consequence of violated law; but since this law is the will of God, it may be said that He *comes* in its enforcement. In like manner, Christ tells the unfaithful in Pergamum that He will *come* and war against them with the sword of His mouth (ii. 16). He says that He will *come* upon the impenitent in Sardis as a thief (iii. 3; comp. xvi. 15). The judgment that shall fall on the unfaithful in these churches is a *coming* of Christ to them. So, again, the meaning is unmistakable when the Lord tells the Laodiceans that if they will open the door, He will *come* in and will sup with them (iii. 20). This is, of course, a spiritual coming; but the term that is used here for His coming is the term that is used everywhere in the Apocalypse (*ἔρχομαι*). There is no other.

Consider also the announcement concerning the grain harvest. Christ is represented as coming forth seated on a cloud, with a golden sickle in His hand; and He puts in this sickle, and the earth is reaped (xiv. 14-16). But if we are forbidden to think of a literal golden sickle, to be seen with eyes of flesh, and of a visible reaping of grain by the Son of man, so are we with equal rigor forbidden to think of the coming and the cloud as visible. In line with this stand certain pas-

sages where Christ, speaking to the faithful for their encouragement, says, "I come quickly" (iii. 11; xxii. 20). It is a coming to gather the grain into his garner, and to fulfil the prayer of His waiting Church (xxii. 17), but can no more be taken in a visible sense than can the passage about sitting on a cloud and reaping with a golden sickle. It seems probable that John saw a coming of Jesus in the event of the departure of each faithful soul at death (ii. 25). Here was a gathering of the ripe grain, as in xiv. 16, only in one case the view is individual and in the other general. The one seems to require the other. And it was in keeping with the words of Jesus that John should think of the coming of Christ as having realization in connection with the death of each disciple; for the Lord at His departure from the earth told His disciples that He would come and receive them unto Himself (John xiv. 3). This seems to refer to a reception of them into the heavenly kingdom, and it is unwarrantable to assume that this reception was to be at some period long subsequent to the hour of death.

There remains yet a single passage in the Apocalypse which has to do with the coming of Christ; but though the language is borrowed from the visible world, it scarcely needs any argument to show that John has in mind a spiritual fact. He sees the "Word of God" riding forth from the opened heaven on a white horse, His eyes a flame of fire, His garment sprinkled with blood, a sharp sword proceeding from His mouth, and behind Him the armies of heaven on white horses (xix. 11-16). John tells us expressly that he saw the scenes of the Apocalypse while in an *ecstatic state* (i. 10; iv. 2), that is, saw them with the mind's eye while in an exalted spirit-

ual state, and it is wholly gratuitous to assume that he thought of all or of any single one of these visionary objects as having an actual, visible embodiment. But let us go a step farther and consider some details of the particular passage mentioned. If the coming of Christ is visible, then we have to think of a literal horse on which He rides, and this horse comes forth from the opened heaven, walking on air. Likewise the garment sprinkled with blood must be understood literally, and the white horses on which the armies that are in heaven ride, and the sharp sword out of the mouth, and the description of the battle (xix. 19-21), and the statement that all the birds are filled with the flesh of the slain (xix. 17, 18, 21). Thus if we hold that the coming of Christ of which this passage speaks is visible, we are involved in low and gross conceptions of the Lord and His activity.

This is the last coming of which the Apocalypse speaks, and we have thus passed all the data in review. The conclusion is that the Parousia of Christ as presented in the Apocalypse is a spiritual process. This view is confirmed by the Fourth Gospel and by the First Epistle. In the Fourth Gospel, as is well known, the spiritual coming of Christ to His disciples is prominent, and there is not a single undisputed reference to a future and objective coming. In the First Epistle of John (ii. 28), a future coming is once mentioned, but the term used is peculiar. John says, "If He shall be *manifested*" (*φανερωθῆ*). This word, as Haupt points out,¹ implies that John regarded the future coming of Christ as the issue of forces that had long been active, not as

¹ *Der Erste Brief des Johannes*, pp. 122-124; comp. also William Milligan, *The Revelation of St. John*, p. 174.

a revelation of something wholly new and resting on purely divine causality. But while the Parousia is regarded as a process, it is not always considered in its entirety. Often it is the glorious *conclusion* of the process that is in mind. So in the Introduction to the Apocalypse, where the author refers to the things that must come to pass *shortly* (i. 1), and again under the sixth seal (vi. 12-17), where there are brought together the most notable Old Testament signs of the day of Jehovah. These are the earthquake, the eclipse, the turning of the moon into blood, the falling of the stars, and the removal of the firmament. To these is added, as a new sign, the moving of every mountain and island. The mountain represents the firmest part of the earth (*e.g.* Ps. xlv. 2; Is. liv. 10), and the island its most distant part (Jer. xxxi. 10). All these signs are but letters that spell out the awful grandeur of the approaching event, and that event is unquestionably the end of the present age. So, again, when the spirits of the martyrs are told that they must rest yet a little while (vi. 11), and when it is said that Satan has great wrath, knowing that he has only a little time (xii. 12), the thought of the author is doubtless on the consummation of the work of Christ.

This brings us to the difficulty already met in the First Epistle, that the end of the process is near (i. 3), or that it will come after a little while. This must be understood in harmony with the general teaching of the book. The present age manifestly includes the period denoted by the symbol of one thousand years (xx. 2). Then the long series of judgments that precede the thousand years seem to require a relatively long period for their realization. It accordingly seems best to take John's words

(*b*) Nearness
of the
Parousia.

in the prophetic sense.¹ The old prophets spoke of the advent of Jehovah as near when it was centuries remote (comp. Is. lvi. 1; Ez. xxx. 3; Obad. 15). So John saw the great facts and issues of the future as rushing on and as certain,² but he did not see them in chronological perspective. It was not his purpose to write an almanac for the Church. The times and seasons are set within the Father's own authority, according to the Master's teaching (Acts i. 7), and John makes no attempt to discover them. He evidently regarded them as undiscoverable, since he represents even the spirits of the departed as being ignorant regarding them (vi. 10-11). He suggests some reasons why the consummation should yet be deferred. One is that the number of the fellow-servants of the martyrs who are yet to be put to death may be made full (vi. 11). Here it is intimated that it would be a loss to the people of God if the consummation should come at once. Again, in the general picture of the ingathering of the faithful, it is said that the harvest of the earth is become fully ripe (xiv. 15), and the grapes are matured (xiv. 18). That is to say, there is a development of humanity both upward and downward (for the grapes are plainly a symbol of the wicked), which must go forward to completion before the end can come.³

(2) Judgments on the wicked. The book of the future which the seer saw on the right hand of God was written within and without (v. 1), this feature betokening the fulness of its content (comp. Ez. ii. 10). No incon-

¹ Comp. Briggs, *The Messiah of the Gospels*, p. 156.

² Comp. W. Baldensperger, *Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*, p. 148. "The nearness of the Parousia is in a sense only a more concrete, easily intelligible expression for its absolute certainty." Comp. also William Milligan, *The Revelation of St. John*, pp. 146-153.

³ Comp. the parable of the Tares and Wheat, Matt. xiii. 24-30.

siderable part of this fulness consists of judgments on the opponents of Christ. These constitute one of the most unique elements of the Apocalypse. They are a brilliant, poetical elaboration of the word of Jesus, that there shall be wars, earthquakes, and famines before the end of the age (Mark xiii. 8), and of that other thought variously expressed in the Master's teaching, that there is to be a ripening both of evil and good before the final harvest and judgment (*e.g.* Matt. xiii. 24-30, 36-43). Of the seven visions of the Apocalypse all but the first and the last are permeated with the idea of divine judgment. The Seals, Trumpets and Bowls are, with slight exceptions, judicial symbols, and the vision of the consummation of the kingdom blends historical judgments with the final awards.

The point of especial importance for the present discussion is that, as the visions of the Apocalypse unroll, there is manifest an increasing severity of judgment. This thought has nowhere else in Scripture so vivid an expression as here. The judgments introduced by the Trumpets differ from those of the Seals in rigor only. There one-fourth part of men were smitten (vi. 8), here one-third (viii. 7, 8). There the phenomena of judgment are natural, — war, famine, pestilence; here they are unnatural, — fire mingled with blood (viii. 7), a mountain of fire turning the sea to blood (viii. 8-9), a star turning waters to wormwood (viii. 10-11), scorpion-locusts (ix. 1-11), and horses with tails that are serpents (ix. 13-21).

(a) Progressive character of judgment.

Again, when we pass from the judgments introduced by the Trumpets to those introduced by the Bowls, the difference in the symbols is one of degree. Here, as

in the second series, water is turned into blood, but now the blood is clotted and putrid (xvi. 3). Here *all* the drinking waters are affected, instead of one-third of them, and they become blood instead of wormwood (xvi. 4). In the second series there is a partial eclipse of sun, moon, and stars (viii. 12); now there is a darkness that causes men to gnaw their tongues for pain (xvi. 11). Thus the three cycles of symbolical judgment set forth with varying imagery the thought that the visitations of wrath on the enemies of Christ become more and more severe. This, of course, implies a development of moral evil (comp. 2 Tim. iii. 13).

The three series of judgments which we have considered are general in character; but as the opposition to Christ is individualized in the beast, the false prophet, and Babylon, so there is an individualization of judgment. The beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone (xix. 20), and their followers are slain with the sword of Christ (xix. 21). This overthrow of enemies is the culmination of the preceding judgments. It has therefore a certain stamp of *finality*. The beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire, and do not return. Hence we cannot regard this judgment as belonging to every age alike; it has a relative chronological definiteness. What this is, can be decided only in connection with later scenes.

The beast and the false prophet are treated as concrete agents that are guilty and capable of punishment.

(*δ*) Individual symbols. This is required by the literary character of the book. The beings who are judged are the men who are hidden behind these symbols. These, according to the extreme realism of the Apocalypse,

are cast alive into the lake of fire. This imagery sets forth in a vivid manner the idea of severe suffering. The simple thought is that the doom of Christ's enemies is comparable to being cast alive into a burning lake.

Babylon, the typical world-city, goes down at length to destruction. The author does not attempt to say in what form this destruction will come. In different passages he sets it forth under different figures. Now it is caused by an earthquake (xvi. 19); again, it is caused by fire (xvii. 16). When Babylon is thought of as woman, her doom is portrayed in the figure of a consumption of her flesh by wild beasts (xvii. 16). From this variety of expression it is plain that the author was not concerned with the historical realization of his symbol, but only with the idea.

These historical judgments on the foes of Christ bear witness to the author's deep sense of the ill desert of sin, and of the futility of striving against the Lord. They witness also to the author's belief in the presence of God in history, prospering the good and overthrowing the evil and also to his belief that it is only by conflict that the good is established.

In the development of the conflict of the Apocalypse the binding of Satan is an important factor. It is plain that this indicates the suppression or removal of his influence. He is bound in order that ^{(3) Binding of Satan.} he may not deceive (xx. 3). But *when* is he suppressed, and by *whom*? Answering these questions out of the Apocalypse itself, we must say that the suppression of Satan is a process extending through the centuries, and that those who suppress him are the followers of Christ. Thus, in the fourth vision, a great voice proclaims in

heaven that the saints overcome the dragon by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony (xii. 11). And in the fifth vision John describes the redeemed as those who had overcome the beast and its image and the number of its name (xv. 2); but the beast is an embodiment of Satan. So the Apocalypse knows of a suppression of Satan that belongs to all the long conflict between him and Christ. Therefore we must regard the scene of xx. 1-3 as a graphic portrayal of the *culmination* of this long process. This culmination is described poetically, not historically. For in history Satan is overcome by moral and spiritual forces, not by an angel; and he is overcome in his various embodiments, not in his own proper person.

The suppression of Satan's influence is said to continue a thousand years (xx. 3, 4, 7). The author's use of numbers throughout the Apocalypse requires that this be taken as purely symbolical, with no arithmetical value whatsoever; but the meaning of the symbol can only be conjectured. It is *probably* to be regarded as a significant multiple of the number ten. This, in the Apocalypse, is the signature of Satan's kingdom (ii. 10; xiii. 1, 3; xvii. 3, 7, 16), as twelve is the signature of the kingdom of God (vii. 5; xii. 1; xxi. 14). Now, just as the 144,000 of vii. 4 and xiv. 1 is built upon the basis of the number twelve, this being its significant part, so the number 1000 may be regarded as built upon the basis of ten. Its value in years cannot be computed. No number of the Apocalypse is arithmetical. But in view of ii. 10, where Satan is said to imprison the disciples of Christ ten *days*; and in view of xii. 14, where the period in which Satan's agent seduces men is represented as three and one-half years, we may

conjecture that the symbol 1000 years marks the period of Satan's suppression as long relatively to the period of his activity. Beyond this suggestion we cannot go on the basis of data found in the Apocalypse.

The binding of Satan prepares for the reign of Christ and His saints (xx. 4-6). Light appears as darkness disappears. This reign extends through the period of one thousand years, which also measures the time of Satan's suppression. ^{(4) The reign of the saints.}

The saints, indeed, reign to the ages of ages (xxii. 5), and the suppression of Satan is everlasting (xx. 10); but these are facts that lie beyond the limit of earthly history, while the period of one thousand years lies *within* that limit.

The *place* of the reigning saints is naturally to be thought of as heaven. The fact that it is *spirits* whom John sees, points of course to the spirit-world (xx. 4). If they reign with Christ, it is presumable that they are where He is. And, further, the language here used of the reign of the righteous with Christ is the same that is used elsewhere in the Apocalypse regarding the redeemed in heaven (*e.g.* iii. 21; vii. 15). On the other hand, there is no indication whatever that John conceived of the place of this reign as being *anywhere else* than in heaven. This point, therefore, is placed beyond reasonable doubt. The reign of Christ is extended over the earth as He is enthroned in the hearts of men. When Satan is expelled, He comes in. In the glory of this reign of Christ, as in His triumph over Satan, all the redeemed share (comp. iii. 21; Matt. xix. 28). These symbols of the binding of Satan and the reign of the saints are already partially fulfilled, and from the character of this partial fulfilment we can

imagine what the perfect fulfilment will be; but *when* it will be, the Apocalypse does not intimate.

On the far verge of the present age the author of the Apocalypse, in harmony with the thought of Jesus, beholds a final scene of conflict (xx. 7-10).
(5) Satan's last assault. The influence of Satan, long suppressed, breaks forth again, not, indeed, within the regions whence it had been expelled, but "in the four corners of the earth" (xx. 8), the distant, little known lands beyond the bounds of the Roman Empire. The Apocalypse takes up the language and the thought of Ezekiel, though with modifications (Ez. xxxviii.-xxxix.). As in the prophet, multitudes came from the extreme north against Israel, when Israel was dwelling quietly on the mountains of its native land; so in the vision of John multitudes come from the corners of the earth against the people of God who are dwelling in peace. Their coming is proof that they have been deceived by Satan.

The *form* of this conception of a last assault upon the people of God belongs to the old condition of the world. The entire earth is now known, and all parts of it are brought near together. But the essential idea of the symbol is that until the end of the age there will be elements hostile to Christ, and this accords with the teaching of Jesus.

In the historical fulfilment of this scene of conflict, the agents employed in overcoming Satan will doubtless be redeemed men, as has been the case hitherto. But since the power of God is in them, and since their victory is thought of as complete, the author can properly use the symbol of fire out of heaven, which consumes the adversaries.

This vision of Satan's last assault and overthrow seems

to be required by the structure of the Apocalypse. For in chapter xii. Satan is introduced in opposition to the Church; and although the various embodiments of Satan have been destroyed, Satan himself remains. But the Apocalypse, whose central thought is the victory of Christ, cannot close while the great enemy of Christ is still on the field. Hence the necessity of this closing scene. Its only unique feature, as compared with previous scenes in which Satan's power has been overthrown, is just this, that it is the *last* scene of the long conflict. The devil, who seems to be thought of as the visible leader of the nations from the four corners of the earth, is cast into the lake of fire, to remain to the ages of ages (xx. 10). Thus his earthly career is terminated, opposition to Christ is done away, and nothing remains for the author but to speak of the issues of the conflict for the men engaged in it.

CHAPTER IV

ISSUES OF THE CONFLICT

BEYOND the final scene of conflict the Apocalypse puts a scene of judgment (xx. 11-15). John beholds a throne, *great* in keeping with the majesty of the enthroned One, and *white* in keeping with His holiness. The One seated upon the throne is unnamed, and therefore according to the usage of the Apocalypse is to be thought of as God, for He only is described as "the one who sits upon the throne" (*e.g.* iv. 2, 3, 4; v. 1). Before this throne are gathered all the dead without exception, both the righteous and the unrighteous. Stress is laid on the *universality* of the gathering. The sea gives up its dead; likewise death and Hades (*comp.* i. 18; vi. 8), Hades seeming to denote the ordinary grave in the earth in contrast to the sea. This language of course does not imply that in the mind of John the souls of the departed had been in the sea or in the grave until the judgment, nor does it imply that material bodies are called forth. It is simply a concrete representation of the thought that *all* who had died and been buried appear before the throne.

The method of judgment is that which is common to Scripture (*e.g.* Dan. vii. 10; Ps. lxix. 28; Rom. ii. 6). The basis of judgment is works, taken of course as an

index of character; and these works are ascertained out of record books. The highly figurative character of the passage is seen in the statement that Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. Death is personified and is judged worthy of punishment as the power which has terminated physical life (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 26, 55). Hades, the place of the departed, being regarded as a part of the apparatus of Death, is consigned to the same doom.

Of this scene of judgment in the Apocalypse it is to be noticed, first, that it *does not preclude prior judgment*. The righteous who reign with Christ during the one thousand years must, from the very nature of the case, have been adjudged worthy of such honor; and those who have not reigned with Him must have been adjudged unworthy of it. Therefore it is impossible to suppose that John thought of this judgment as a determination of the soul's relation to God. Second, it is to be noticed that this judgment is not represented as essentially *altering* the condition of spirits. The righteous have reigned with Christ hitherto; and after this judgment before the white throne they *continue* to reign with Him (xxii. 5). And as the state of the righteous is not essentially altered, so it cannot be supposed that John thought of the state of the unrighteous as essentially altered by the judgment which he describes. Their separation from Christ, which had continued up to this judgment, has in it the bitterness of the "second death." But while the author did not think of this act of judgment as altering the state either of the righteous or of the unrighteous, he thought of it as a *finality*. He knows of no return from the lake of fire, and no interruption of the reign of the righteous.

Since, therefore, this so-called final judgment does not, according to John, alter the condition of spirits, and since it is not instituted for the purpose of determining their conditions, we may hold, in harmony with the teaching of the Fourth Gospel, that its underlying thought is *recognition* of the soul's estate, recognition public and final.

The Revelation of John, like all the apocalyptic literature, uses strong colors in depicting the future both of the righteous and the unrighteous. The fate of the wicked is foreshadowed in a vivid manner, in the character of the judgments inflicted upon them in this present life. Such visitations of wrath, for example, as the scorpion-locusts and the horses that emit from their mouths fire and brimstone, — symbols of grievous suffering, — lead us to expect that, in the coming age, the impenitent will meet a fearful doom. If an author thinks of God as inflicting judgments upon men, which can be likened to scorching heat, and to a darkness so dreadful that men gnaw their tongues for pain, and of His doing this to move them to repentance, we anticipate that he will use dark colors in portraying the future of the finally impenitent. And such is the case in the Apocalypse. There is a new and original symbolism to convey the author's thought. Thus he speaks of the "second death," the "lake of fire," or the lake that burns with fire and "brimstone." He alone of New Testament authors, describes the fate of the wicked with the verb "destroy" (*διαφθεῖρειν*), and is the only one to employ the verb "torment" (*βαρύνειν*) in this connection. Again he says of the judgment of the world-city that its smoke goes up to the ages of ages (xix. 3).

(2) The
second
death.

The Apocalypse, however, though coining some powerful symbolism of judgment, resembles the teaching of Jesus in that it has relatively *little* to say of the fate of the unrighteous, and relatively *much* to say of the state of the saved. Its references are significant but brief. They stir the imagination; but here, as elsewhere in the New Testament, there is no attempt to give details of the future condition of spirits.

The author thinks of the fate of the impenitent as a "second death" (ii. 11; xx. 14; xxi. 8), which he twice declares to be equivalent to the lake of fire. This expression naturally points to a *first* death, that is, the death of the body, and in so far seems inapplicable to the devil (xx. 10). Here, therefore, one must suppose that his thought was on the lake of fire as a symbol of judgment, and that he ignored for the moment the equivalency of this symbol and the "second death." Since he thinks of the devil—a spiritual being according to the Jews—as cast into the lake of fire, it is manifest that he employed fire, or fire and brimstone, as a symbol, and not as a material reality. Borrowed from the world of sense, it is used as a figure of intense suffering. It is not clear why the author called the lake of fire the "*second* death." It is not probable that he coupled them together in view of a common element of suffering; for oftentimes *physical* death is painless, as he of course knew. Nor can we suppose that he called the lake of fire the "second death," on the ground that its effect upon the spirit is similar to the effect which physical death has on the body. This goes back to dust, and, as a body, is totally destroyed. John's use of the word "destroy" (xi. 18), when speaking of the doom of those who destroy the

earth, might indeed seem to favor this view, but does not in reality. For the individual spirit is not thought of as ceasing to exist in its individuality, else the author could not speak of the wicked as being tormented to the ages of ages (xiv. 10-11), or describe their fate as a being outside the heavenly city (xxii. 15). To be within the city is a reward and a felicity only to a conscious being; and to be without could be a punishment and loss only to spirits capable of realizing that they *are* without.

The significance of the "second death" must therefore be sought elsewhere. We may suppose that the author had two ideas in mind when he called the fate of the ungodly a "second death," two ideas which are directly suggested by the phenomenon of physical death. First, the thought of *negativity*, the antipodes of life, and all that normal life implies. As the first death makes the body worthless as a body, so the second death makes the spirit worthless as a spirit. It is the opposite of that for which the spirit exists. And, second, the thought of *finality*. This is the one unfailing mark of death; it is the end. The career of the body terminates forever at death, and the spirit enters once for all into a different estate. So the lake of fire is the second death because it symbolizes an experience or state of the spirit which is final.

If by the symbol of the "second death" the author wishes to mark the state of the wicked as being forever the antipodes of normal life, this symbol might be regarded as including *all* that he says of the fate of the wicked. They are tormented day and night; they suffer intensely, as one having physical life would suffer who should be cast into a burning pool of sulphur. But the thought of this imagery is contained in the simple

fact of the absence of life, the negative state denoted by the "second death." For they who experience this loss are reasoning, moral beings—beings who *know* their estate, and know that their deepest instinct is unsatisfied. They know that they are outside the city, out of fellowship with the holy God. And this is the author's final description of the state of the lost (xxii. 15); this is the equivalent of the lake of fire.

This condition, like the reign of the righteous in the light of God, is said to be unto the ages of ages (xiv. 11; xxii. 5). The author thinks of it as beginning when the record books are examined (xx. 15), the books which contain the story of the earthly life. This examination is portrayed as contemporaneous for all souls; but yet as we have seen in connection with the reign of the righteous the author did not think of the essential fact of judgment as occurring first at the time of this general scene before the white throne. The unrighteous, who do not reign with Christ, have of course been adjudged unworthy of such a reign, which means that the record books have been examined. This reigning with Christ, whose beginning is called the "first resurrection" (xx. 5), is apparently thought of as beginning when the conflict of life ends (iii. 21). It begins in a fuller and more glorious sense when Satan is bound (xx. 2), and a third beginning, yet higher, is reached when the last conflict on earth is past (xx. 7-10), and the marriage supper of the Lamb is at last come (xix. 9). Thus the author seems to have thought of a *progressive* fulfilment of the reign with Christ. The righteous soul comes to this reign through his own victory; but the reign itself grows richer in meaning as the victory of Christ becomes more and more complete. So in like manner, the author

probably thought of the essential fact of judgment for the unrighteous as accomplished at the close of the individual earthly conflict (ii. 11). The statement that they lived *not* till the thousand years were finished (xx. 5) is defined by the language used of the righteous, that *they* "lived and reigned with Christ" (xx. 4). Hence resurrection is here thought of as a blessing, and the unrighteous do not share it. They are deprived of it because of their unrighteousness. The author makes no other suggestion regarding their estate than this, that they do *not* enjoy what is granted to the righteous. But plainly this involves the thought of judgment; and the not reigning with Christ is the same as being without the city (xxii. 15). It appears, then, that the scene before the white throne is rather a final statement of judgment than a statement of final judgment. It is a formal and impressive presentation of the general truth, not a historical portrayal of individual experience.

The author of the Apocalypse dwells on the New Jerusalem in detail and with delight, while he passes (3) The New Jerusalem. over the lake of fire with the briefest reference. The light of the New Jerusalem falls upon him from time to time through the entire development of the conflict. In the initial vision of God heaven appears as a place of light and life and joyful adoration (iv). God Himself is the first and great fact of which the seer becomes aware. There is a bow of grace about the throne, and a crystal sea of life before it. Three times John has a vision of the redeemed before he beholds the final glory. He sees a countless multitude in white robes with palms in their hands and songs on their lips (vii. 9-10), and he learns that day and night they serve God in His temple, and that His tabernacle

is over them (vii. 15). He learns, also, that the Lamb is their shepherd, guiding to fountains of life-giving waters, and that God wipes their tears away (vii. 17). Again, he sees them standing on Mount Zion, having on their foreheads the names of Christ and the Father, and hears them singing a new song, unintelligible to him (xiv. 1-3). And a third time he sees them standing by the crystal lake, singing the song taught them by Moses and the Lamb, the deliverers of God's people (xv. 2-3).

The vision of the New Jerusalem presents in a more elaborate manner the thought of these foregleams of its glory. It is preceded by the vision of a new heaven and a new earth, the realization of Isaiah's symbol so long delayed (xxi. 1; Is. lxxv. 17; lxxvi. 22). The simple idea of this symbol is that of a new *abode* which takes the place of the old abode of unrighteousness, the scene of conflict between men and Satan. It is therefore not essentially different from the symbol of the New Jerusalem. Nor is any good reason apparent why this new earth and holy Jerusalem should be regarded as different from that abode of the redeemed which, under various names, is referred to again and again throughout the Apocalypse. It is called the Paradise of God (ii. 7), Mount Zion (xiv. 1-2), and heaven (xi. 12). We are surely not to attribute to John the speculation that the redeemed go to heaven, and then at the end of this present age return to a new material earth which swings in the orbit of the old one. The descent of the New Jerusalem out of heaven cannot be pressed to indicate anything further than the *divine origin* of the new abode of God's people,

This abode is elaborately described (xxi. 10; xxii. 2), while but a few words are given to its occupants (xxii.

3-5); and yet John was summoned by the angel to behold the "bride, the wife of the Lamb" (xxi. 9). Thus the author leaves the bliss of the heavenly bride almost entirely to the reader's imagination. It is suggested, but not described. He exhausts the symbolism of human language in depicting the *abode* of the redeemed, and thus by his very silence in regard to the redeemed themselves, which were his proper theme, he confesses that their bliss and glory are indescribable.

The features which suggest this glory in the most significant manner are, first, *light*. The light of the city was as the light of a crystal jasper (xxi. 11), and made sun and moon unnecessary (xxi. 23). It is the shining of the Lord God Himself (xxii. 5). And suited to this light, the abode of the redeemed is made of most precious stones and metals, — gates, foundations, and streets (xxi. 18-21). A second feature of the city suggests the composite character of its occupants and the vastness of their multitude rather than the glory of their estate. The city has twelve gates which open to the four points of the compass, and thus it is marked as a city for *all* the people of God. It is for Jew and Gentile alike; for the names of the tribes of Israel are on the gates, and the names of the apostles of Christ are on its foundations (xxi. 12, 14).

Third, the city is a perfect cube, a majestic Holy of Holies (xxi. 16). Therefore all the inhabitants of the city live in the most sacred and intimate fellowship with God. All are priests unto Him (i. 6; v. 10; xx. 6). His gracious presence makes a temple unnecessary (xxi. 22).

And, finally, the description of the city is characterized by its symbols of *life*. Through the streets flow

clear rivers of life-giving water (xxii. 1); and along these streams, on either bank, the old tree of life that God set in Eden, now indefinitely multiplied, yields monthly fruit, and even its leaves help to satisfy the spirit's longing for life (xxii. 2).

Thus, indirectly, but in most significant terms, the author suggests his idea of the state of the redeemed. They dwell in light, in perfect fellowship with God and Christ, and are satisfied with heavenly life. And then, in words which mainly concern the occupants of the city, he adds these features: the redeemed serve God, and they reign to the ages of ages (xxii. 3, 5). They see His face, and His name is on their foreheads. It is thus manifest to all that they are children of the Lord God. Elsewhere it is said that they who overcome in the conflict of earth bear the *new* name of Christ (iii. 12), as well as the name of God. Now, since Jehovah is thought of as coming into manifestation in Christ, it may well be that, in the mind of the author, "beholding the face of God" was nothing else than reading the new riches in the name of Christ.

The redeemed serve; they also reign. They are active for God in the new abode to which He brings them, and their activity is royal. They share the throne of Christ as He shares the throne of God (iii. 21). Whatever glory lies in the reign of Christ, it is shared by the redeemed, and that participation continues to the ages of ages.

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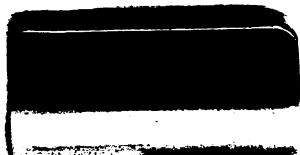
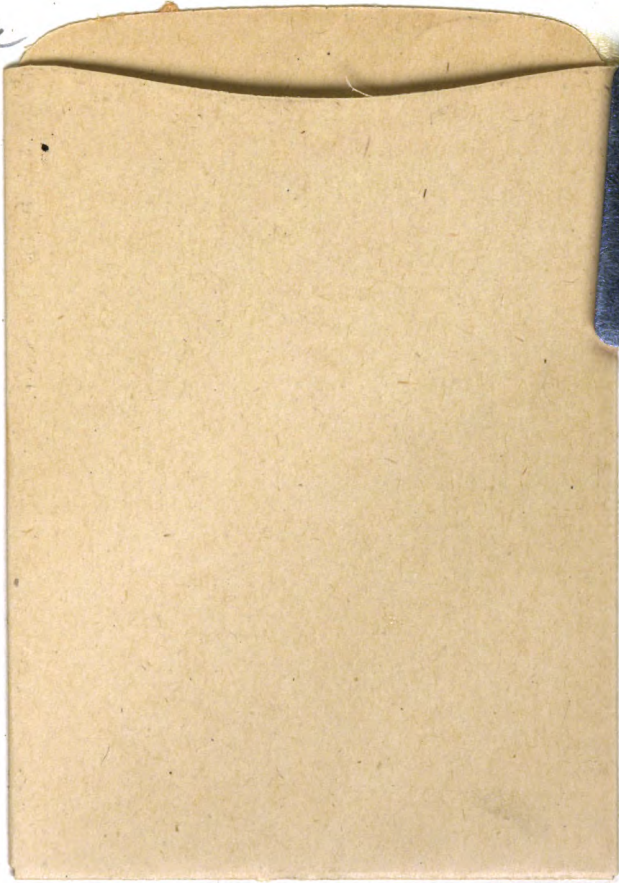
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